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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

NON-PROMOTION IN KINDERGARTEN: TEN CASE STUDIES

by

SHARON LEE SKUBA

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A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

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Susan Therrien

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ABSTRACT

This study attempted to investigate patterns of development which may have been characteristic of children prior to and following non-promotion in kindergarten. The effects of retention on a child at any other grade level may not be generalizable to a child in kindergarten because of the requirement for parental consent to such a decision at the kindergarten level. Since no research on retention at the kindergarten level was found toexist this study was designed to be exploratory. Ten children who had spent two years in kindergarten and who were currently completing grade one, were interviewed, as were their mothers and their teachers. School records also provided information about the kindergarten years.

Data revealed these children to be unique individuals. Their academic achievement as measured by end of grade one achievement tests ranged widely. End of year promotion recommendations varied from promotion to a regular grade two to recommendations for special placement. Family history of the ten children indicated that all individuals were born within the latter half of the school admission year. The child's maturity compared to others in and out of class was indicated as a possible factor influencing the child's school progress prior to non-promotion in kindergarten. The birth order of the individuals within their family indicated that first-born children tended to succeed in grade one following retention in kindergarten. Children with older

siblings who had had school difficulties, also tended to establish patterns of non-success following retention. Teacher and parent expectations may have been influenced by reports of poor sibling progress and thereby may have simply caused the parent to expect less of the non-promoted child. In this manner, the child's progress may have reflected lowered expectations rather than actual poor ability.

Furthermore, parental locus of control was examined as an influencing factor on children's academic achievement. Children with parents who had a relatively external locus of control tended to have less success in grade one. Conversely, children with parents who displayed an internal locus of control tended to succeed in grade one.

The source and the time of the non-promotion decision also yielded some interesting data. When the non-promotion decision was parent-initiated, the child tended to succeed in grade one. When the decision was initiated by the school, a greater range of achievement was noted. The time of the non-promotion decision tended to affect the emotional adjustment that the m Decisions made after the child had started a grade one program permitted little time for adjustment. The similarity of the second year of kindergarten to the first was mentioned by several mothers as a source of dissatisfaction.

Apparently no one factor alone is likely to be associated with non-promotion. The combination of several factors was considered in light of the pattern for success

or failure that appeared to be developing for the non-promoted individuals.

Recommendations for further research and implications from this study for school workers were made.

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I. NATURE OF THE STUDY

Uniqueness amongst individuals is, of course, neither a novel nor an unexpected aspect of development. Several facets of this notion form the philosophical basis of this study:

> Individuals are unique. The rate of growth is but one way individuals vary. Individual youngsters differ in their physical growth patterns; they also differ in growth patterns for cognitive and socio-emotional attributes. Because physiological and psychological development is not uniform, different rates of learning are evident amongst children.

Furthermore, experiences in school may tend to increase differences between children rather than decrease them (Mood, 1970).

Of course, the uniqueness of one child presents little problem within a tutorial system of instruction. The tutor simply waits for the child to successfully complete one assignment before continuing with the next. A classroom teacher, with a prescribed curriculum to follow, may face many problems coping with the different learning rates of individuals, as he or she waits for each child to complete each assignment successfully.

Problems often associated with heterogeneous grouping of children are compounded by the practice of promotion from one level of instruction to the next. Promotion has been viewed by some school workers as a means to restrict the range of achievement differences within a class, and thereby, it is assumed, serve to simplify lesson preparation and classroom management for the teacher. Thus the reasoning has been that the curriculum could be taught to a classroom of children who are as homogeneous a group as possible. Non-promotion, or retention, is a course of action reserved for a child either too slow to reach the curriculum goals for his/her grade, or too immature in appropriate social and emotional behaviors. Educators who have favored the practice of grade retention usually have claimed that it served two major purposes: to remedy inadequate academic progress and to aid in the development of students who are judged to be emotionally immature. Students are sometimes retained at a given grade level because school personnel judge that they are emotionally immature for their age. These students are seen as unable to relate adequately to their peers or to deal with the responsibilities assigned to students at a particular grade level. Scott and Ames (1969) noted that such students presumably would be in a better position to develop if they were held back a year and placed in a class where responsibilities coincided more closely with their level of maturity. Schools most frequently require a student to repeat a grade when the student has not gained the level of knowledge and skills expected upon completion of that grade. As Goodlad and Anderson (1963) stated, the rationale is that students who have not adequately mastered the material at the grade level they have just completed will not be equipped to profit from the material at the next highter grade level and, for their own good, should not be promoted.

The advantages and disadvantages of policies of promotion and non-promotion for such children have been debated by school personnel and researchers for some time. Serious discussion can be traced back to the early years of this century (Faulkner, 1908; Ayres, 1909).

With its apparent long history, high cost, and widespread use (Jackson, 1975), one might assume that by now the subject of non-promotion would have been completely investigated. While much research has been done, most of the findings have been inconclusive in determining the effects of non-pomotion on individual children. There are many contradictions in the researach literature regarding the advantages of either promotion or non-promotion.

Research previously conducted has involved children at all levels of schooling. However, no reference could be found to research concerning non-promotion of children at the kindergarten level.

Of particular interest is the year of schooling immediately prior to grade one. With its conceptual aim to foster maximum overall development in each child, the kindergarten program incorporates social, emotional, physical and creative, as well as intellectual aspects of development. Such a goal seems better served not by summative, but by formative evaluation; that is, the process of observation of individuals, assessment of their needs and perscription to meet these needs. Such an ongoing process is positive: emphasis is placed on what the child is capable of doing, and it builds upon what he does well.

Out of the 4300 children enrolled in kindergarten in a large urban school system during the academic year 1978-79, approximately one hundred children were in their second year of kindergarten. Whether initiated by parental request or school recommendation, the appoval of both parents and teachers had been obtained for retaining the child for a second year at this level.

Although a sizeable number of children were known to be in their second year of kindergarten, this fact may not be in contradiction to the general aim of kindergarten philosophy. That is, perhaps these children are on a continuum of learning and time is being given to them to continue learning to their best advantage. It might be speculated that the second year of kindergarten may not be equivalent to a 'fail', in the same sense that this word has been used in other situations. This speculation led to the formulation of several research questions which became the focus of the study.

For the purpose of phrasing these questions, the usage of several terms needed to be clarified. Non-promotion and promotion were used in reference to the decision made at the end of the first kindergarten year. Non-promotion was defined as that action which resulted in the child spending two years at the kindergarten level. For the sake of variety, non-promotion was used interchangeably with the term, retention. The words, succeeder and non-succeeder were used in reference to the school progress made by the child during grade one. A succeeder was a child who was promoted to a regular grade two class at the conclusion of grade one. A non-succeeder was a child who was either recommended to a special class or special pogram for the yeer following grade one.

A. THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study has been designed to probe into the following aspects of the non-promotion of kindergarten children:

1. What circumstances influence children's development prior to non-promotion?
2. What circumstances influence children's development during and after non-promotion?
3. What happens to children's academic success following non-promotion in kindergarten?
4. What patterns, if any, are evident across non-promoted individuals?

B. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Because of the absence of non-promotion research at the kindergarten level, case study methodology with data gathered through interviews was chosen to provide general indicators of pattern development as a foundation to later research. Several limitations are embedded in this design. A small sample size restricts the generalizability that might be possible about the effects of non-promotion on children at the kindertgarten level. Although the characteristics of the children varied considerably (indeed, children were selected because of varying individual traits) the study nevertheless, only involved ten children. As argued by Kennedy(1978), increased variability amongst cases does not necessarily reflect variability in the population as a whole.

The use of recalled information from the mother is another limitation. Memory may be faulty. When data are based on faulty memory, the data themselves may become contaminated. Thus reliability and validity are affected.

Furthermore, the selection of cases, the selection of questions for interview discussion, and the selection of portions of the data included in the summaries are based on decisions made by the researcher. These multiple selections may also affect the validity of the findings.

A final limitation to the study may be embedded in hidden biases of the researcher and reader. In a descriptive study, the researcher's bias may be shown in the choice of words used for portraying individuals and incidents. Thus the descriptions will mold the impressions of the reader. To some extent this must be recognized. In an effort to keep this biasing to a minimum, copies of the summaries were returned to the parent for alterations in content and intent. In this manner, respondents had an opportunity to correct interpretations made by the researcher and the researcher had the opportunity to clarify vague and unclear comments recorded during the initial interview.

C. SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS STUDY

This study generated descriptions that will, it is hoped, assist parents, teachers and administrators in making decisions related to the general worth of retention for individuals. By noting personal, family and school characteristics from individuals in the cases, and comparing them to those of another child, conclusions may then be drawn regarding the general advantage and disadvantage of non-pomotion for that child.

As this study was descriptive, it shed light onto the general area of non-promotion at the kindergarten level. Such a foundation may point to specific directions for future research of a more experimental nature.

The following four chapters describe the study in its entirity. A review of the pertinent literature is presented in Chapter 2; the descriptions of the investigative procedures is contained in Chapter 3; the summaries of the interviews and the data analysis comprise Chapter 4; and conclusions and implications are suggested in Chapter 5.

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Ever since age-related grades were instituted as a part of school organization, there has been a dispute about the best way to treat students who did not learn enough to enter the next grade (Walker, 1973). This policy-related discussion in the educational field has led to a long history of investigations into non-promotion. Two studies are indicative of the findings during the first half of the twentieth century.

Keyes, 1911, (as cited in Bocks, 1977) studyed 5000 children in a school district, and found that 21 percent of the repeaters improved in academic achievement, 39 per cent did not change and 40 percent made less gain than during the previous year. Buckingham (1932) randomly selected 100 children for study. Of these, 31 were retention cases. Nine of those children improved upon retention of their grade.

On the basis of such findings as these, researchers generally concluded that retention did not necessarily lead to mastery of materials and skills. Similar conclusions were derived from research involving the effects of non-promotion on emotional-social student behaviors (Sandin, 1944; Goodlad, 1954). The bulk of such research studies called for a reversal in the non-promotion policies in school districts. Social promotions to subsequent grades without concommint 'readiness', or reorganizations of school administration to permit non-graded schools were recommended.

Perhaps because of the absence of much "tight" research, little change was observed in school policies. Negative findings on the effects of non-promotion were so uniform in the 1930's and 1940's that many investigators may have considered the question closed. Whatever the reason, relatively fewer studies on the subject were conducted after 1950 (Goodlad, 1963).

The earlier research was concerned with statistically significant findings that could be applied to all students. No study could be found which attempted to investigate why some children repeated and later succeeded, while others (in majority, it is true) were retained at a grade level and later made little or no measureable academic gain. This writer suggests that the question of why is equally valuable for research and indeed may lead to some better understanding of the effects of non-promotion on children.

After 1950, a few studies appeared which seemed to indicate that the differences between the behaviors of retained and promoted children were not nearly so great as the previously reported studies indicated. Lobdell (1954) concluded that

> ...careful selection of the children who are to repeat a grade... can help bring about success, during and after the year of repeating, for a larger percent of children than previously available data might lead one to expect (p.337).

In 1959, Worth reported:

> Continued reliance upon nonpromotion in itself to improve school achievement is unwarranted...Non promotion does not seem to have as adverse an effect on social-personal development as previous research

> might lead one to expect. The social personal adjustment of low achievers...appears to be as good, if not better, than it is when they are promoted (p.201).

In spite of their apparent return to emphasis on a global reccommendation of the effects of retention on individuals, the following two studies are indicative of recent soundly designed research in the field.

In a longitudinal study of Grade three repeaters measured three years after the retention, Ogilvie (1961) found that the group of promoted low achievers were superior to the matched group of non-promoted children in eight areas of test achievement. He concluded that the benefits of promotion to low achievers who are promoted is greater than the benefits for a like number of non-promoted low achievers. This conclusions is supported by Dobbs and Neville (1967) in their study of matched groups of retained first graders and promoted second graders. After one year, both reading achievement gain and arithmetic achievement gain of the promoted group was found to be significantly greater than the non-promoted group.

As already suggested, amongst the numerous references explored in depth, not one research study could be found which reported findings concerning retention at the kindergarten level. Whether previous researchers have not considered this worthy of investigation or whether they have felt that observations at other grade levels could be generalized to the kindergarten level (thus making such a study superfluous), could not be determined. However, two factors would seem to point to the advisability of just such research. Firstly, the fact that nearly 100 kindergarten children in one large urban Canadian school board alone, are annually not promoted from kindergarten would seem to indicate a need for research at the kindergaten level. Secondly, the fact that non-promotion at the kindergarten level requires parental consent, as opposed to sole school responsibility at the other grade levels, would indicate that a difference exists between retention at kindergarten as opposed to the grades. Whether this difference is substantial or not needs to be investigated before one can assume that retention policies are equally applicable at all levels of education.

The strongest appeal for research into the patterns of characteristics amongst individuals and their school progress was made by Kifer (1977). In investigating the impact of success and failure on the learner, he concluded that a single instance of success or failure is less significant in effect on an individual than the pattern produced by a sequence of successful or unsuccessful attempts. In this way, successful and unsuccessful academic achievement had a cumulative effect on the personality measures (and thus indirectly on future achievement). Furthermore, although school success, or lack of it, had a substantial effect on the development of personality characteristics, the home also affected the personal development of the student. Those homes which showed high levels of concern and which rewarded academic achievement produced students with more positive views of themselves and their abilities, than did homes with low levels of concern and reward.

This finding suggested that one could not view the impact of success in schools apart from what was happening in the home.

A. IMPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH FROM LITERATURE

The research reported in literature suggested several implications for this study. These include:

1. An investigation into the reason why some children succeed after retention and others do not would be an extention to research already undertaken.
2. Retention at the kindergarten level is a topic which has not been researched.
3. Since patterns of success and failure, rather than a single incident of either will affect achievement and personality, it is the patterns that deserve most attention.
4. Family characteristics influence an individual and these characteristics should not be overlooked.

III. RESEARCH PROCEDURES AND DESIGN

This chapter outlines the research procedures and design which were incorporated into the framework of this study. The chapter begins with a justification for the choice of case study methodology using interview data. This is followed by a description of the sequential decision-making employed. The pilot study is reported, as is a description of the children who made up the sample.

A. JUSTIFICATION OF DESIGN CHOICE

Because non-promotion at the kindergarten level has received minimal attention from researchers previously, an approach that would permit an investigation of the range of effects that retention has on individuals would be needed. At this stage, the research must be fundamental and basic, perhaps capable of laying the foundation for later, more highly controlled studies. For various reasons, several methodologies were discarded.

Experimental Research

The first style of research thus discarded was an experimental design. Experimental research would not permit the exploration of the interrelationships of several unknown variables. Experimental research is best used in fields where much background information is already known. Although non-promotion has received much attention by researchers, the conclusions drawn are contradictory.

On the one hand, some investigators have found non-promotion to be a deterrent to later achievement (White & Howard, 1973; Dobbs & Neville, 1967). Also supporting the position that retention did not help students 'catch up' academically, Godfrey (1970) stated that feelings of self-worth were lower in retained students.

On the other hand, other researchers have found that repeating a grade appears to have beneficial effects on student's grades and the children's behavior in a group. (Scott & Ames, 1969; Nicholson, 1965; Stringer, 1960)

Nevertheless, research on older grade children may not be generalizable to the kindergarten level.

Questionnaire Methods

A questionnaire method would also be of limited value for gathering data. While permitting large numbers of individuals to be surveyed, the questions must be determined in advance, and interesting or unusual answers cannot be explored in detail. A questionnaire with a Likert scale requires forced choices from answers preselected by the researcher. This method is not particularly condusive to exploring a topic where perceptions and insights might vary considerably amongst individuals answering the questions. Certainly, the use of a qustionaire method would be difficult for non-readers aged six or seven.

Statistical Survey

Also eventually discarded was a statistical survey method. A statistical survey might be useful for gathering basic information questions related to population data. For example, the proportion of each sex that is not promoted could be investigated to discover if indeed more boys are retained than girls; or the span of birthdates and relative ages at the time of retention could be charted to illustrate if younger children tend to be retained to a greater degree. Such a survey of all non-promoted kindergarten children spanning the past three or four years was contemplated, but difficulties were encountered in locating all of these children, as no central registry of all records yet exists.

Case Study

Case study approach is described as an examination of "an instance in action" (MacDonald & Walker, p. 2) and the aim of case study research is to reveal properties of the class to which the instance belongs.

> When explanation, propositional knowledge and law are the aims of inquiry, the case study will often be at a disadvantage. When the aims are understanding, extention of experience, and increase in conviction in that which is known, the disadvantage disappears. (Stake, p. 6)

The case study method has been criticized for related, inherent weaknesses. These are:

1. The necessary reliance on researchers who may have possible hidden biases;
2. The low reliability and validity associated with multiple selections of cases and instances;
3. The problem of generalizability.

To some extent these need to be recognized and acknowledged. However, these weaknesses may not be severe enough to undermine confidence in the case study method altogether. Kennedy (1978) for example, notes that generalizability is not an either-or situation. Rather it is a judgment of degree. (p. 4)

In recent years much has been written in support of case study research (Stake, 1978, MacDonald & Walker, 1975, Edgar and Billingsley, 1974, Herson & Barlow, 1976) for fields such as education. Stake (p. 7) pointed out that since few laws have been validated in the field of education, and because research information is useful for reasons other than the development of laws, continued attention to laws is somewhat pedantic. He forcasts increasing utilization of the case study method as a direct means of 'adding to experience and improving understanding.'

Because it permitted an indepth penetration of the topic of non-promotion by looking at those individuals affected, the case study method was selected for this investigation. Although relinquishing the greater depth permitted by a single case study of one individual, a series of case studies which might reflect some degree of variability was planned. A longitudinal case study method was ruled out, at this point, due to time constraints. Rather, data were gathered through interviews regarding recalled information. Recalled data are affected by time; and mistaken memory must be recognized as a potential influencing factor. The recalled data were supplemented by information gathered from the child's school records.

Cumulative record cards were searched for any pertinent notes regarding the kindergarten and grade one years.

B. PROCEDURES FOR DATA GATHERING

The research questions as itemized in Chapter One provided the goal for date gathering. Because at least one question dealt with the effects of non-promotion following retention the children selected had to be beyond the second year of kindergarten in their school progress.

A sample size of between eight and twelve children was deemed appropriate as this number would be large enough to yield data based on a variety of circumstances and yet it would not be too large a number with which to cope.

THE PILOT STUDY

A pilot study in two stages was undertaken to answer several questions related to specific aspects of the study. In the first stage, the focus was placed on the practicalities of the qustions and their context. Questions were asked of three non-sample children. The results seemed to indicated that:

1. Children aged six to eight, are capable of verbalizing facts related to retention despite a two year time lapse.
2. To a lesser extent, children aged six to eight, are capable of the recall of emotion related to retention.
3. Recall ability varies amongst children. Greater quantity of recall data from the child was associated with those

children who readily volunteered additional comments. It is assumed they were more relaxed.

In the second stage of the pilot study, the order of the interviews and the parent questions were considered. A child was interviewed in school, followed by a group interview involving mother, father and child at home. On the basis of this part of the study, some indication was given that:

1. Adults are capable of recalling and verbalizing personal incidents and emotions.
2. The willingness to share private thoughts is maximized by informal discussions prior to and for short spans during the interview.
3. The pacing of the interview should be relaxed.
4. Additional assurances of anonymity reassures the adult subjects.
5. Advantage lay in interviewing the mother first.

The effect of non-promotion on the child as perceived by the mother was valuable in preparing the researcher to interview the child later. While both parents shared interesting comments, the impracticality of interviewing both parents in all cases of the full study was realized. Therefore, father interviews were not included. The decision was made to include the mother's recalled information, based on the supposition that she is the primary influencing adult for the young child (Frankiel, 1969). However varaiations in family structures would be noted and joint or single parental decisions would be described. In the research study as conducted, data related to the father was taken only as revealed by the mother.

C. LATER DECISIONS AND RELATED PROCEDURES

Known was the fact that approximately one hundred children were presently in their second year of kindergarten in the large urban school system selected for the study, but unknown was the number of children that made up the population of those who had attended kindergerten for two years at some point in time previously. Because kindergarten programs had only been established as part of the public education system approximately six years ago, the earliest graduates might be in grade five. Had any of these children been retained in kindergarten the oldest might possibly now be in grade four.

The research department of the large urban school system was approached for permission to use system data for this study. Agreeing to support the study in principle but pointing out the heavy administrative demands involved, the head suggested using a sample of schools rather than the total. Thus it was not possible to select children for the study from all possible children who had been retained at the kindergarten level. However, the schools selected for the study were from those recommended as most likely housing retained kindergarten children.

A questionnaire was sent to the principals of the twenty schools identified by the school board research department. This survey asked for the names of children now in grades one, two or three who had been retained at the kindergarten level and the names of the current grade classroom teachers (see Appendix A for a copy of the letter to the principal and reply form). After ten days, those principals who had not replied were telephoned as a reminder. Of the twenty letters sent, nineteen were returned, and seventeen of those listed at least one child who matched the criteria described. Five additional schools were requested for addition to the survey. Of these, four replied to the request letter and three housed at least one child for the group. Out of the twenty-three schools from which replies were received, eight children were identified at the grade three level; eleven at the grade two level; and forty-one at the grade one level. (In addition, one child attended primary opportunity class and one attended a half day kindergarten and half day grade one program.)

The grade one level permitted a population from which a group could be drawn. Furthermore, this level permitted the least direct influence of time (for forgetting) and the least opportunity of other confounding influences. Rather than employ a randon sample technique to select the group for case study, an attempt was made to deliberately select children with as many different characteristics and from as many different situations as possible. Classroom teachers were asked to briefly describe the child, his ability and his circumstances. From these informal reports, ten children were tentatively selected. Of these ten, seven were selected because their achievement ranged from high to low, and an additional three were selected because of unusual circumstances in their history.

Letters (see Appendix B) were written to the parents of the children explaining the study and asking for parental permission to involve the child and the mother in the study. A phone call was used to gather tentative approval from the mother and to establish an interview date.

Each of the mothers was interviewed in her own home. A consent form was obtained for participation in the study. A cassette tape recorder was used to record the conversations and the researcher made brief notes during the interview. Each tape was transcribed shortly thereafter and a summary of the interview was returned to the mother for additions and corrections.

Each child was interviewed at school. After spending half an hour to one hour in the classroom, the researcher and child retired as unobtrusively as possible to a secluded corner of the school for the interview. The average child-researcher interview lasted fifteen minutes. While in the school setting, the researcher also made brief notes regarding items in the child's cumulative record card. Particular attention was paid to records from the kindergarten years, especially the SPICE checklists (see Appendix C).

If former kindergarten teachers were presently on staff, they too were involved in a short interview.

D. THE CASES

Those children identified by their school principal were children who had spent two years in a kindergaten within the school system. As mentioned previously, ten children were originally selected for study. Of these six were male and four were female. It was necessary to delete two of these cases, as one mother refused permission for an interview, and in the other case, the mother could not be located. (It is presumed that the family moved shortly before the initial contact). The female case discarded could not be replaced with another of the similar sex. Therefore, the final population became seven male and three female. The birthdates of these cases spanned six months: from October 2, 1971 to March 1, 1972. Three children had attended their second year of kindergarten in a class with the same teacher each had had the prior year; and one had changed schools between the two kindergarten years. The ten school locations ranged across the four quarters of the city. Five of the children were first born; three were youngest in their family; two were neither. Family housing ranged from large single family units to low-income subsidized row housing. One child was native; one family was recently immigrant. Two of the children were enrolled in a bilingual school program (French-English) in the second year of kindergarten.

In order to preserve anonymity, the children were code-named:

a. subject 1: Gordon
b. subject 2: John
c. subject 3: Karl
d. subject 4: Donald
e. subject 5: Janis
f. subject 6: Sandra
g. subject 7: Samuel
h. subject 8: Martin
i. subject 9: Chad
j. subject 10: Barbara

Transcriptions of the taped interviews were read and summarized. This thorough familiarization of the cases revealed a number of unique features of each case as well as several common facets across the cases. Synopses of the interview data and the information from school records highlighted a number of possible patterns of development. The following chapter presents this data.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS

In order that the reader is able to fully comprehend the data analyses, extended summaries of the interviews used for generating a framework for each case, were drafted and are included in the first section of this chapter. Following these summaries are synopses of the cases which house cogent points in each case. The last portion of the chapter considers the data across the cases and points out several emerging patterns amongst the individuals.

Several conventions were adopted for the reporting of the summaries. As use was made of direct quotation from the transcripts of the tape recorded interviews, standard notation was used with short quotations placed within the body of the summary (and denoted by quotation marks); and longer extracts inserted in indented, single-spaced blocks (without quotation marks, except in the instance of the interviewee paraphrasing something said to her.) To identify the speaker, particularly in extracts involving conversation of both the interviewer and the subject, notations of "I", "M", "C", and "T" referred to the interviewer, mother, child and teacher respectively.

Further standard notation included the use of "..." to denoted deliberate omissions from the original transcript. Phrases that were incomplete, or pauses made by the speaker were shown as "--". Abbreviations were kept to a minimum; however, one or two served to avoid repetition of longer citations. For example, K1 and K2 are used to identify the first and second year of kindergarten respectively. SPICE is the name of the school system checklist used to report a kindergarten child's developmental progress, covering Social, Physical, Intellectual, Creative and Emotional aspects of growth. Quarters of the city were denoted by NW, NE, SW, SE.

SUMMARIES OF CASES

A. CASE 1: GORDON

PERCEPTIONS FROM GORDON'S MOTHER

Gordon had attended playschool the year prior to his first kindergarten experience. The playschool teacher had recognized Gordon as young but had mentioned that she felt he was doing really well, "compared to the rest of the kids that are his same age".

Kindergarten 1. During K1 Gordon was absent from school due to illness, approximately 53 days. He suffered from a bronchial form of allergy to molds, dogs, cats and "a whole string of things, ...the usual ...you know everything that they ever talk about kids being allergic to, he was allergic to". He would cough by the hour, usually at night. He also was poorly coordinated. "He didn't hold his pencil properly". He didn't hold his spoon properly. He didn't hold anything properly. His ability to read went undetected by the kindergarten teacher. In the final interview that year, the parents happened to mention that he could read at which the teacher "was completely shocked".

The Non-Promotion Decision. At approximately November of K1, at an interview with the teacher, Gordon's mother was informed that a possibility existed that Gordon would spend two years in kindergarten. Citing immaturity as the main reason, the teacher had given an example of Gordon sitting in class and waiting, because the project he was required to do needed an opened glue bottle. "Gordon had never seen a glue bottle in his life, and he didn't know how to use it, so she let him sit through the whole class." The mother admitted becoming defensive at this interview.

> M: I went in...Thinking that she was going to say that he was doing alright and when she said he wasn't, I immediately thought...The first thing she said was,"Is Gord an only child? "I said,"Yes." "Oh, you can tell by the way he doesn't want to do things for himself." I thought, "Oh just because he's an only child, now, he doesn't want to do things for himself". Then she commented about his poor patience. Well, he is left handed,... so he's poorly coordinated. So I think my first reaction was that already this poor child has got two strikes against him--he's too young and he's left handed. He's an only child so therefore he must be a hopeless case. So I was immediately on the defensive.

After this interview Gordon's mother considered requesting that he be placed in the other kindergarten class, and she also mentioned that she considered withdrawing him from kindergarten and placing him in playschool, but that the teacher had encouraged him to remain.

> I: Can I ask a personal question about your first reaction?
> M: Oh, I think I cried for about three days. He was my little (baby)... and I was crushed. Here I thought I'd done such a great job of raising this kid and there I was ...

In January Gordon's parents both attended the interview with the teacher. The mother felt a more possitive attitude in the teacher. The teacher had commented that some children would survive at the bottom of the class.

> M: Gord will never be content to be at the bottom... He's got to be at the top...So this was her feeling why he shouldn't go on. It wouldn't be a struggle...

Near the end of the year, an interview with the parents, the teacher and the guidence counselor was set up. The guidence counselor related the incident of his own son who had been pushed on in a similar situation, an action which he had regretted because of the frustration in this child. The teacher had expressed concern for Gordon on a few days that had been "very, very frustrating." The parents appreciated the personal examples because they knew of no similar situations and their consequences. "You felt that if they were that positive about it...That you were pushing...And you might be paying some day. Gordon's mother had been the person to inform Gordon of the non-promotion decision.

> I: (May I ask)...how you handled it?
> M: Well we handled it wrong. I should have handled it the way all the rest of the mothers did. They made the teachers tell the kids. I didn't. I felt it was my responsibility, so I told him. I just said, "They just feel that you'll make it better by going back another year...that your printing isn't up to--And that you don't cut and--And I said "Now you're going to go back another year and really try

to cut.

His mother felt that Gordon had a "terrible time" accepting it because he had friends in the class who were going on. Gordon asked questions regarding a neighbor boy who didn't speak clearly. "He can't even talk, how come he's not going back?" and "What have I done wrong?" His mother tried to explain it: "You haven't done anything wrong. It's not what you've done wrong, Gord. It's that you're very young." But Gordon knew of another classmate equally young going on. His mother noted that he asked all summer,

> M: "What do I have to do to go on to grade one?" It was just continual , you know, and it was hard.

His parents, especially his father, were concerned that he might be bored the second year. They considered a bilingual program but the only one in the area, a Ukrainian-English one, would not have been suitable.

Kindergarten 2. Gordon attended the same class again with the same teacher. Commencement to the second year was eased by a neighborhood friend who was beginning his kindergarten experience:

> M: If he had to go by himself to that second year of kindergarten... It might have hurt him more. But then Gregory started with Gord and they almost lived together. And you know, he just changed friends. I think it hasn't hurt him, that way.

There was a marked similarity between the first year of kindergarten and the second, at least for Gordon.

> M:...he brought home exactly the same paper on exactly the same days he'd done the year before. So that was the hard part because we'd said he would have a different program. He was terribly bored. I

fought with him the whole year to get him to school.

During the course of the year, Gordon's dog was subject to fits, and because he was a possible cause of Gordon's allergic bronchitis, a decision was made to have him 'put to sleep'. "Although he just thinks that he died." Gordon 'cries about (the dog) still, the odd night'.

Also during that year, Gordon's wish for a baby brother came true; and his father's job took him away from home less frequently. Music lessons were introduced. Two recalled incidents illustrate Gordon's school life. In the first, Gordon had thrown something in the air, and the teacher, fearing he would hit somebody, required that he stay in after class. "He cried and cried...he was afraid he would miss music that day." Gordon never related that incident to his parents. The teacher called the next day when Gordon was absent, thinking perhaps that he was away for reasons other than physical illness.

The second incident involved a late arrival at school one morning. With the two other children involved, Gordon was sent to the principal's office and his parents were informed by phone. "He was never late again... He'd learned his lesson...I guess." Also that year at school, Gordon was given the opportunity on two occassions to read to the class.

Grade One. In contrast to his first year of kindergarten when he didn't ask for help with his glue bottle, in school Gordon now was "always asking questions.

He's the first one to volunteer for everything."

Gordon had little to do with his former kindergarten friends since he made new ones in K2. However one friend, who had gone to playschool and K1 with Gordon, now teased him about failing.

PERCEPTIONS FROM GORDON

What Gordon liked best in kindergarten was 'free play', when he would play with blocks. He related

> G: I can remember when I was walking and I always looked down and Keith, Colin and Robbie were playing there. They kept making these little chairs out of blocks and Keith sat in his and it broke. And he went "Ooo-ee".
> I: And it fell down?
> C: Yeah. He was sitting on it...man was there a lot of blocks. (laughs)

He recalled doing worksheets where "you have to look at these things and say which things were different". And "that was hard."

Gordon's teacher was 'nice' but she "didn't like us to stay inside for recess. She didn't like that at all." Another thing she hadn't liked was "when we were late getting in."

> C: When the door is closed, you're late.
> I: Then what did you do?
> C: Well it all depends on how late you are.
> I: What if you're a little late?
> C: Well then she yells at you. And if you are really late, like Dawn and Suzanne and Patti were, then you have to go to the office...if you're really late.
> I: Were you ever really late?
> C: (pause) Well, only once.

Gordon still associated with two other boys who also spent two years in kindergarten with him. Occasionally they played at recess. This play took the form of calling Gordon an 'alligator' when he wore his green tee-shirt. Gordon teased them about their bean plant that wouldn't grow. If any friends asked why he spent two years in kindergarten he told them, "I just say that I wasn't old enough." If he could have a wish for anything it would be, "that all my friends would be in the same room at school." He anticipated a pass to grade two, but hoped his teacher wouldn't be Mrs. Carter. "She yells too much."

INFORMATION FROM SCHOOL RECORDS AND STAFF

The SPICE Checklist for K1 notes that Gordon was immature, "He needs to continue to develop many gross and fine motor experiences. He has a short memory recall...and he speaks in short sentences." He would sit patiently all afternoon for a crayon. In September he was not able to put on his own shoes or coat - he waited for an adult to do it for him. A notation, Nov. 25/76: "He can now tie his shoes and dress himself." A frequent response to a question directed to him was, "I don't know ." He could print his name, and identify colors, shapes and sizes. At the end of the report is a notation that he can read "but he does not select a book as free play."

His kindergarten teacher recalled that Gordon would flinch if a ball was thrown to him. Attendance was low both years in kindergarten. As his teacher in K2 as well, she noted tremendous growth; however, "this wes not beyond that expected for his age level." The repeat wes justified on non-academic grounds. She noted a verbal ability to express his feelings, however he resorted to tears on occasion. One comment she remembered Gordon making occurred after the birth of his younger brother. When the new baby had been brought home Gordon said he then had to sleep, "~~at the~~ other end of the house." When the teacher mentioned this to the mother, Gordon's mother commented that his bedroom was now across the hall from where it had been previously.

His grade one teacher noted that Gordon was an advanced reader. In fact he was reading at a grade five level. During reading class, he and about five other children were grouped for advanced reading and enrichment activities. His teacher felt his social skills had improved. At the commencement of grade one, he scored at the 94%-tile on the Metropolitan Readiness Test.

B. CASE 2: JOHN

PERCEPTIONS FROM JOHN'S MOTHER

The first recollection of John's speaking at a vary early age, came in the bathtub.

> M:...and he started reciting nursery poems and it was a four stanza thing. It was then we discovered what he was saying that we realized how well he knew it. And he would do the same with the Irish Rovers,

> who were his favorites...His memory was really good and he showed it from a real young age."

Prior to enrolling in school, John had few friends from the neighborhood. "The neighborhood had one girl his age who he got along with, but we didn't seem to find enough children his age in the area."

Kindergarten 1. At four years seven months, John started kindergarten in the neighborhood school which had one kindergarten teacher. Looking forward to school each day, he made many friends, Although,

> M:...I discovered when he brought his playmates home, that many of them were eight or ten months older than he...
> I: Did you notice anything in the way they were playing that indicated to you that John was younger, apart from their ages?
> M: I think more than that, his (willingness) to go along with their ideas and thinking that they had the right idea rather than perhaps holding out for his own...

Attending in the morning class, John occasionally took a three-quarter hour afternoon nap. He enjoyed attending kindergarten, although,

> M:...there were one or two experiences early on when he described that he felt left out of a particular game, but he was ready to bounce back in there.

This seemed more characteristic of the September to November stage after which he took a spurt in maturity.

> M:...by the time he hit five at the end of January, he looked like he was ready for kindergaten. If it was a semester kind of program, then I would have placed him in kindergarten in January. So it just seemed that was when it really flowed for him.

John brought home art work and papers with a great deal of excitement.

> M:He shared a great deal of what he brought...and he brought home everything he made and was very excited and did well with things he brought home.

John liked playing with friends inside or outside. Compared to his sister who was currently in kindergarten, John at the same age was not as particularily interested in books or "sounding out words".

> I: At any point during the course of that year, did the teacher...give you any idea that he might be having some difficulty?
> M: She said he was in the middle group, that he was going along quite well and although he needed to be enouraged-at times he showed he didn't have as much confidence as he could have.

The Non-Promotional Decision. Prior to the end of the first year of kindergarten, several influencing events occurred. John's mother had discussed the situation with several mothers of children who were having adjustment difficulty in grade one. One particular woman had described how her son had cried every morning for five months.

> M:...and to me, the thought of putting him through anything like that for the period of time until he hit age six, or seemed ready, just made me shudder and I decided in no way was that the route to take.

Furthermore, John had allergies which made him nervous.

> M: I felt if we put the kind of stress that some of these parents were talking about, what happened to their children at grade one, then I would end up with a child who was at the doctors all the time ... And I certainly don't want that.

The parents became aware that children in other provinces did not commence kindergarten before age 4 years 8 months. That is, the cut off date is December 31. In those provinces, John, who was born at the end of January, would not have started kindergarten until a year later.

John's need to relinquish classmate friendships may have been a concern to the parents had not several coincidences occurred. Several kindergarten children were from the separate school system and would take their grade one in a nearby separate school; two close friends were in the process of moving. Only one friend, whom John had known in kindergarten would go on to grade one. Therefore, even if John would have continued on, he would have been necessarily made new friends. Whereas John's father was "all for trying the grade one, John's mother was not so sure.

Knowing that the only kindergarten teacher at the neighboring school was remaining on staff in the same grade assignment and concerned that this teacher would repeat the program in entirity, the parents discussed alternatre programs available in the vicinity: a bilingual kindergarten approximately two miles away, and arts enriched program approximately ten miles away, and a "regular" kindergarten in the adjacent neighborhood, perhaps 1 mile away..

Postponing the decision to September, both parents agreed that John would be allowed to mature during the summer.

When school commenced in September, John's grandparents were visiting, and John was enrolled in grade one in the same school in which he had attended kindergarten.

> M:...and so he went that first day, and of course, we went there with him, and I remember experiencing a real "gut" feeling that this was wrong, and it would do nothing but frustrate him. Not that he didn't do work, sort of on his own --his reading, sort of writing; but he was more interested in

> creative play with classmates. He was on a definite--wave length and I just knew in my real sense that this wasn't what it was.

After the relatives left, John's mother made a visit to the principal of the neighboring school where she had a "really good experience".

> M: He said so simply--that's what happened to my daughter...sort of, it wasn't that she wasn't bright. It was just that when she hit grade one, she wasn't prepared to do the work. She wanted to play, so they put her back in kindergarten." He said what it's doing for children is giving them a chance to, rather than be somewhere at the middle or lower end of the heap, to be at the top of the heap, because it's giving them six to eight months of age.

John's father was still concerned about the stigma attached to a second year at kindergarten.

> M: For my husband it was, I think he felt like that it's calling him a failure if we don't let him go on ahead and it was very important.

His father's views were changed by chance when one day after church, he conversed with another kindergarten teacher who encouraged,

> M:...that it would be appropriate to keep him back rather than push him ahead, and this made (the father) rethink it.

John's mother believed that if it was explained to a child why he was being retained and that if the child was made to feel the decision was "right" he would be able to adjust.

> M: We talked about it many times, in many different ways to give him an understanding of it...I think in explaining it, I tried to--on the basis of age more than anything else.

His parents decided to enroll him in the kindergarten program in the neighborhood school.

Kindergarten 2. The second year of kindergarten was somewhat different for John. The teacher was good for him, "because she had a very definite program, rather than so much arts and crafts." For those children, who were ready, a "'real' reading readiness program was undertaken, so she was giving him a lot." By exposing the class to a fair number of field trips, particularly to watch children's plays or story events, the teacher built upon John's interests.

> M: He got to put on, by himself, a puppet show for the students there. It was "The Witch and the Cookie Tree". He had the Sesame Street puppets and he said when he was finished, they clapped so hard he thought the whole school was there watching. She encouraged me to take him to someone at the university and start him in drama, which I did not get involved in....

Instead John was involved in two other activities for this year (partly because he knew no one in his new class and partly to prevent any boredom with only a kindergarten program). These were Suzuki music, "a group type rhythm" approach to music, and Beavers (a scout group for boys aged 5-7) which brought John in contact with other youngsters from both community neighborhoods.

During the last two months of the second year in kindergarten, John was transferred back to his first kindergarten room in his own neighborhood school.

> M: She (the K1 teacher) agreed to the two months, mainly because they were doing a new thing and there was the Commonwealth Games and he was so excited about that.

John's reaction was excited; however, his mother noted,

> M: What the teacher didn't notice was that he was sort of strutting around the kindergarten in terms

> of "I have been here before --I know it -- I am bored with anything that smacks too much of baby stuff."
> I: Did she comment to you in that final two months that she noticed any change compared to the year before?
> M: She said he certainly seems to have confidence and sort of a feeling of standing up for himself -- these kinds of things.

According to his mother, John seemed to adjust to the non-promotion. He had not been teased about it by other children. His reply to adults was indicative of the thought he had given to the topic.

> M:...even the odd time now when anyone asks him -- "Oh you sound like a smart boy, what grade are you in?", he will say, "Well I am in grade one, but really I should be in grade two" and that's about it.

His mother recalled no tears associated with the non-promotion decision.

The Grade One Year. John attended Grade One at his neighborhood school, with the same teacher who had him for one week the previous year. This year however, the class was a split grade one-grade two. His mother felt the program was excellent with the teacher working with several ability groups at both grade levels.

> M: He likes going to school, did not want to miss. He is very particular about being there on time and about contributing... And remembering his own things, like bringing (a book) back on a certain day...

He was excited about school, bringing home things to work on and other things to share with his mother.

A comparison was drawn to his one friend who also attended K1 with John. This boy, who was a few months older and who went on to grade one when John was retained

> M:...has become bitter. He cannot understand why John and his sister like school. Like, "What to like about school" and he just makes smart alec kinds of comments about it.

His out of school time included swimming, skating, and skiing. He also chose pretend games in the manner of drammatic role play and puppet simulations of TV action shows.

PERCEPTIONS FROM JOHN

John had a fairly full memory of people and incidents associated with the time he was in kindergarten. He was able to recall the time he and his mother first visited the second kindergarten.

> C: You see, it's a, sort of-my mom,she...One day we were playing at this playground. It was right in the middle of kindergarten. Mom said this was my new class and that everything would be okay... I didn't really want to go.
> I: Why?
> C: Because I had to make new friends... leave my old friends. I was wondering if I had to go there for all grades...

John recalls that he wasn't forced to attend the new class:

> I: What did your mother tell you?
> C: She said I didn't have to go. She said she wanted me to go to see if I liked it. I liked it a bit -- sort of, not.

He also recalls that his new teacher was not mean but she was a "bit strict. I didn't like that."

John attended that class for the major part of the school year, according to school records. But his memory or knowledge of, time is somewhat different:

> C: On my second day, my mom said she would put me back in the first school. She waited a week--I don't know why she waited so long.

When asked about his friends, he related many incidents both from school and home play. These friends did wonder why John went to another school, "they did wonder a bit - only a week - then they forgot". These same friends didn't tease him about two years in kindergarten, but if they did ask him, John was prepared:

> C: I would tell them the whole story. But if they ask me in school, I'd say, "I'll tell you at recess".

John confided a personal wish that he would only have spent one year in kindergarten, but looking down at his intertwined fingers, he whispered, "But don't write that down."

INFORMATION FROM SCHOOL RECORDS AND STAFF

From information in his school files, John attended 180 and 185 days of school, respectively during his two years in kindergarten.

The SPICE Checklist notes that during his first year in Kindergarten, John willingly participated in all activities, cooperated with others and was courteous. Physically his small motor coordination was "good"; his large motor "fairly good". He also was beginning to distinguish sounds and knew his abc's and their phonetic associations. Furthermore, he displayed 'good' listening habits, 'good' vocabulary and 'good' memory recall. Emotionally, he seemed well adjusted to kindergarten, with confidence growing throughout the year. The teacher noted that he always did his best work. At the end of that year, there was no recommendation for non-promotion.

The SPICE report during the second year indicated continued growth. Socially, he played well with other children. He shared ideas in the group. Physically his fine motor skills became even more controlled. He did very well intellectually, using numbers, colors and recognizing some words in print.

Towards the end of the grade one year, John was rated as at the top of his class in academic subjects. Orally, he was somewhat hesitant,

> T: More so now than before, his speaking skills are poor. He would rather whisper to me than speak to the whole class.

The teacher questioned if perhaps this might be a result of insecurity produced by his mother's protectiveness.

> T: I know she may have the best of intentions. But it could be that she's squashing him. He has no reason to be insecure - he has so much potential.

To his teacher he did not appear to be overly excited about school.

The principal of John's present school noted that he was not failed through school policy but through parental choice. In fact had his permission been sought it would not have been given. He felt John's mother circumvented normal practice by withdrawing John from this school and enrolling him in the neighboring school.

C. Case 3: KARL

PERCEPTIONS FROM KARL'S MOTHER

Since a very young age, Karl always enjoyed listening to stories. In fact he and his two older brothers would insist "No bed until bedtime stories" are read.

Kindergarten 1. Karl was most willing to go to kindergarten when he was enrolled at age four years seven months. He certainly "didn't have to be dragged out the door". He enjoyed the crafts, and he liked his teacher, who seemed to be "really creative". However, his mother noted that his one problem was that "he fell down in concentration".

His mother attended the class occasionally and she observed that Karl:

> M:...seemed to sit quite well; he got along with the other children; he never fought or anything like that.

Chickenpox and a series of colds kept Karl (and his brothers) away from school for a number of days that year. Occasionally when he didn't want to do something but more frequently when he didn't want to eat all his meal, Karl complained of stomach or headaches.

The Non-Promotion Decision. At an interview "at Christmas time" Karl's mother was told that Karl was having difficulties.

> M: I know that he wasn't learning his alphabet. He wasn't too interested in learning it ... There were other things that seemed more important to him.

Commenting, "I felt that was a little early", his mother felt that Karl's teacher had already made up her mind, that Karl "was going to repeat the year" and that " he was young".

But from her own experience with her oldest son who had been born at the same time of the year, the age at admission could not be the sole factor:

> M: But I know Alan was born at the same time of the year, and he has done fine at school.

His parents were somewhat unprepared for the school recommendation:

> M: We were surprised because he is so quick around here... We could give him a couple of jobs to do and he could carry out those jobs fine. We could say, "Pick up your shoes off the landing, vaccuum it, and straighten out your bedroom". And he could keep that all straight. He's always been good like that.

In reflection, his mother recalls that the non-promotion decision did not really bother her, because

> M: (The middle son) has had problems with school and it would be a good idea for Karl to repeat. We don't want another one with the same problems - this was in our minds.

Believing that how parents handle the explanation of the non-promotion to the child, both parents were involved in telling Karl:

> M: We just said "Mom and Dad think that you are a bit younger than the other children and it would be better for you to stay in kindergarten for another year. Then you will be more ready for grade one... We just talked about it, not making a big production

> of it at all.
> I: What was his reaction?
> M: That was okay with him.

Both parents could understand exactly how Karl would feel because his father had repeated a grade in primary school and his mother had been 'put back' at the elementary school level, when she had emigrated to Canada.

Kindergarten 2. Leaving the placement of Karl to the school, the parents didn't specify a teacher for Karl's second year in kindergarten. Karl was placed "in the other class"

> M: We feel, it was a wasted year, ... Just the same old thing. They didn't really push it... It seemed they hadn't done anything different than the previous year. ... Mind you, he enjoyed the crafts. But I think he was a little bored the second year.

Karl would come home from class and in response to his mother's querry about what he had done, he would say "One of these old - we made it last year".

The mother summarized by stating that she and her husband both felt he didn't get "anything out of repeating that year".

Friends of Karl's from the first year continued to play with him. As far as the mother could discern, Karl was never teased by any children about his non-promotion.

Grade One. Karl made some progress academically during the year in grade one. While mathematics had been no problem at all for him, he had had extra help in reading. He attended a "resource room" daily, plus a volunteer aide helped him three periods per week. Furthermore, he got reinforcement at home:

> M: Well he still has a problem - I know because I help him - in learning his alphabet - eight or nine letters...Some days he's got it and some days he hasn't. He gets confused - like 'h'. He'll say 'haa' one day. The next it won't come to him. So of course, if you have to read 'hat', and you don't know what sound the first letter makes, you can't sound it out.

Karl was a sociable child. He had many playmates with whom he associated outside of school hours. Most of them did not attend the first year of kindergarten with him. Together with these friends he rode bikes, built tents, and played on a dirt pile in the back. On warm summer days they used the pool in the yard; or tried badminton and baseball; in poor weather they played indoor games or watched T.V. ("They will watch cartoons on Saturday, until they have their fill. They watch so much that they come up to see what else they can do.")

Contrasted with the middle son, who is careful but fearful, Karl was compared to his oldest brother, Alan.

> M: Karl is like Alan. Karl will try anything. He doesn't think if he will cut his arm off doing it... He doesn't think... "I'm going to burn myself." He's just confident doing it... If you say, "Be careful",... he'll remember what you said... But he won't stew about it.

PERCEPTIONS FROM KARL

Karl, a tall boy whose eyes alternately light-up and fade as interest in conversation waxes and wanes, recalled several incidents from his two years in kindergarten (building castles in the block corner; having a picnic in the park; taking a field trip to the fireball). Karl did not find any of the classwork hard, "... Maybe the other kids, but not me".

Karl understood that he spent two years in kindergarten. His explanation for this was:

> C: My mother kept me in once.
> I: Oh, how come?
> C: I don't know. She though it would help.

Evaluating this,

> I: Did it (help)?
> C: (pause) Not really.
> I: Did you like kindergarten?
> C: Well sort of. But you had to get to grade one.

Now that he is in grade one he thought it was "more fun" but he hoped not to spend two years at this level. He also could recall several children who had been in the classes with him:

> C: Danny lives across the street from us... I should be in the same grade as him... He's a grade ahead of me now... I should be in grade two but I'm in grade one.

Karl related many humorous incidents in which he and his playmates were involved but he had not ever been teased by these friends.

INFORMATION FROM SCHOOL RECORDS AND TEACHER

According to his SPICE Checklist for the first year of kindergarten, Karl enjoyed participating in class activities and he got along well with classmates. Also, he was not subject to emotional outbursts. In assigned activities, his attention would wander; he didn't care to sit still and participate during music period where he appeared restless. Also his pencil control was shaky. All in all, his teacher concluded that he was simply "immature". It was recommended that he spend another year in kindergarten.

During the second year in kindergarten the SPICE Checklist noted that Karl interacted well socially. He got along with classmates and shared materials and teacher's time. He enjoyed large muscle physical activities in the gym, although his eye-hand coordination in pencil and paper activities was only "fair". He followed directions well, spoke in short sentences fluently, and attempted all tasks given to him. (Some of these were more successfully completed than others). He could print his name (in capital letters) although he sometimes reversed (in mirror) the third letter. Although he enjoyed listening to stories and looking at books, he would not choose these activities if he could play in the block corner. He enjoyed making craft projects. He was a "most pleasant child to have in class".

His grade one teacher characterized Karl as a bright and verbal child. "He is quite capable of talking about himself. He can relate his ideas well". However, he had some difficulty reading, and this seemed related to a poor memory.

> T: After he has been taught the word, 'boat', and his word comes up in his story, he may or may not remember it. If he did remember it, he might not know it three lines later.

However, Karl wanted to read. He wanted to do well in all his school subjects. (He is achieving well in math). But in spite of the fact that an aide worked with him and he attended "resource room" five times a week, he had a poor memory. Indeed this might have been a "real" problem rather than a developmental lag. Karl's ability to match sounds to symbols was diagnosed at a pre-primer level on a test administered on March 13, 1979. Restlessness and a short attention span were characteristic of his independent work.

D. CASE 4: DONALD

PERCEPTIONS FROM DONALD'S MOTHER

Although Donald was born out in the country, he had lived most of his life (the past four or five years) in the city. He had no prior group experience before kindergarten.

Kindergarten 1. Donald enjoyed going to school, starting off each morning on the run to the nearby apartments where he met a friend of his. When he came home from class he would talk about his teacher or what he had done in class.

> M:...About how he used to bake stuff and have cookies. He'd come home and say "Mom, I have to bring snack to school tomorrow". So he'd bring vegetables or some sweets and juice.

But he had difficulty with some of the tasks set by the teacher,

> M: Well, he had kind of a hard time of it,

> recognizing his letters and colors - he enjoyed going to school that first year. But I don't know if he learned very much.

During an interview with the mother, the teacher had mentioned that Donald had some difficulty following directions. His mother had found this somewhat difficult to accept as it contradicted what she had noticed at home.

> M: Here at home he listens real good. And he gets down and does it. And he remembers real good, And I don't know why he does that at school. Maybe he gets away with a lot more.

Both parents agreed, however, that Donald had some difficulty learning. On some occasions, Donald's father had tried to assist:

> M: He came home and tried his best to teach (Donald) and talk to him - not in a real harsh voice or that but, you know, even about money. To try and teach him about pennies and how many there are and that - we tried but he just keeps forgetting.

The teacher had also encouraged Donald's mother to take him for a physical check-up, because Donald seemed to complain of stomach and head aches.

> M: I took him to the doctor, and he told me that Donald was just acting up, or playing hookey... And he said that Donald was only acting. That's just what he said.

The Non-Promotion Decision. At the end of kindergarten no recommendation as such was made to the parents, and Donald began Grade One the following school term. However, after the readiness tests were administered, the the grade one teacher suggested that he be 'put back' in kindergarten.

> M: She more or less said that if Donald didn't have any progress in his work, she was afraid she would have to keep him in again.
> I: When the teacher first told you that Donald might

> repeat, can I ask you what your reaction was?
> M: My reaction? I wasn't too happy about it. I would have wanted to see how he kept on in school. I wanted to see if he can do a little bit more.

The mother and father discussed the matter and both agreed to go along with the teacher's suggestion.

The mother told Donald, without using the word 'fail'.

> M: I told him, "If you don't do your work you're going to go back to the same class next year again".

Donald had some difficulty accepting it.

> M: Well, I explained it, but it seems like he just - it hurt him - and he starts off in tears - when I tell him.

Kindergarten 2. His second year in kindergarten was little different from the first. The teacher was different; his progress was minimal, ("he seemed to pick up a little but not very much")

> M: Well, I don't know how to say it - but the teacher was telling me he didn't really want to go. He wasn't interested in work. He acted like he didn't really want to listen.

The K2 teacher mentioned that Donald tended to have emotional problems too.

> M: She more or lessly said that he would just sit there - he wouldn't do a thing, or that...

In the second year, work was sent home as reinforcement.

> M: But it seems like you tell him the words and you ask him to say it and that - and he looks at the word - it takes him a long time to remember the word... And numbers and colors - I think he can count now but I don't know if he can write his numbers.

During that year of schooling, Donald missed one block of time spanning almost a month while he was in hospital recuperating from a car accident. While playing near the side of the street, Donald had been hit by a car, and he broke an arm and a leg. Donald longed to get out of the hospital and back playing with his best friend.

> M: He cried; he said, "I'll bet Spenser's looking all over for me".

Grade One. His present year in grade one was not particularly easy for Donald. His mother had read his report cards and attended interviews with his teacher

> M: I ask him why he isn't improving in school. I tell him I got his report card and I wasn't satisfied with it. And I ask him to do a little better - and to lister to his teacher. And do his work. And he sits there and in tears - so I don't know.

According to his mother, Donald hasn't been teased by his playmates regarding his two years in kindergarten. Similarly his siblings don't tease about that subject either.

Outside of school Donald played with one or two friends in the neighborhood; he rode his bike; he liked to use his father's tools to construct wooden things; and when he visted his grandfather's farm, Donald had the opportunity to ride a horse.

PERCEPTIONS FROM DONALD

Donald had some difficulty recalling incidents and people from his kindergarten year. He could remember a sandbox and playhouse. He couldn't remember any of the children or his teacher. When prompted he thought he remembered that his teacher wore "pink pants and a yellow shirt".

He liked going to school, especially listening to the teacher read stories in the teaching corner. As for reading a book himself, "reading's hard. Math ain't"

I: How come reading is hard?
C: I don't know - I can't ...I don't know how.

Donald played with two friends at recess in the parking lot of the school. The boys laughed and teased each other in their play fighting. Occasionally the play fighting made Donald annoyed.

C: I go and tell my Mom these guys are always beating me up.
I: What does she say?
C: She says, well I can't help you.

After school he likes to go the corner store where he could spend his allowance, "only one dollar". He could buy a chocolate bar, and a whole bunch of bubble gum, and some popsicles. The lady at the store would tell him how much change he had left.

Donald looked forward to his summer holidays at his grandfather's farm, "I get to ride horses and I get to go up on the mountain, and everything".

If he could wish for anything it would be a new bike.

C: I always ride old bikes... I wish I could have a (new) bike. And I could play and at school I could have a lock, and take my bike to school. And ride it back and forth everyday.

INFORMATION FROM SCHOOL RECORDS AND TEACHER

The record of Donald's first year in kindergarten was brief. Donald worked well in one-to-one situations or small groups. He enjoyed physical education and showed development in large muscle coordination. His interest in academic-like matters was low; however, he did enjoy listening to stories. Orally he spoke in short phrases. He participated in creative art activities, enjoying making objects in paper and cardboard.

The second year of kindergarten was summarized in the second SPICE Checklist. Socially Donald participated in large and small group activities, sharing ideas, materials and teacher's time. He got along well with others. Physcially large and small motor skills were developing well. Intellectually he could not read the numerals, could not recite the alphabet. He could, however, recognize colors. Auditorially, he was beginning to identify rhyme words. His memory and attention span were developing. Comprehension extended to putting events in sequence and identifying the main idea of the story. His speaking was fluent. His visual discrimination permitted printing his name from copy. His interest in books continued and he had some recognition of signs and calendars. Creative work was "good". Emotionally he seemed attentive and interested in his environment, accepting class routines and beginning to work independently.

The grade one teacher noted that Donald, was a happy child, but that he was progressing slowly in reading. At the beginning of the year, using the same testing measures that had been used the year before (when Donald was in grade one for a few weeks), she noticed almost no change in achievement. She concluded that little or no progress was realized in the second year of kindergarten.

The teacher mentioned that Donald had been tested by the school councellor and a reading specialist during his grade one year.

The school counselor reported that

> Donald's greatest strength is his ability to recognize words as measured by the Peabody, in which a child is given a word to which he then points to one of four given pictures... (His) major weaknesses include:... His auditory memory is extremely weak so he finds it difficult to remember what he hears. His eye-hand dexterity is also poorly developed. His verbal reasoning ability is dismally low because he cannot see similarities between objects.

Donald was recommended to be enrolled in a special class (Primary Opportunity) following grade one.

E. CASE 5: JANIS

INFORMATION FROM JANIS' MOTHER

Prior to enrollment in kindergarten, Janis did not have any group experiences. Bonding to her mother was strong.

> M: ... She never stayed at her grandparents either. She would - it was always me, you know, wherever I went I had to take her. ... I was kind of with her all the time. ... If I went bowling, or something, she was there.

Added to this, Jan's father was often working out of town so her mother "always had her with me."

Kindergarten 1. Jan was four years nine months when she started kindergarten; which her mother felt was "too young to go, but I let her go..." There were tears, with Jan crying "an awful lot. All the time she was crying, all the time. I was getting so upset you know." She also had some emotional problems in reacting to questions.

> M: She just couldn't - she wouldn't answer questions. You would ask her something and, you know, she just wouldn't answer them.

As a volunteer aide in the kindergarten Janis's mother was often in the classroom.

> M: When I was there she was fine because she stuck by me all the time. I couldn't get rid of her.

Jan's mother accompanied the class on each field trip.

> M: When I could go home and she couldn't, she just screamed and cried and carried on; and oh, gee, you know, "You'd better come with me then if you're going to put up a great big fight.

And yet Jan enjoyed going to school. There were no temper tantrums in getting ready and no complaints about headaches or stomach aches in attempts to stay home.

Non-Promotion Decision. All through the year, Jan's mother felt that her child wasn't achieving at the same level as other classmates "She was sort of, you know, she wouldn't grasp things". The topic of non-promotion was first broached by the kindergarten teacher.

> M: She said, "I hope you don't feel as if I'm putting Jan down or anything, but we kind of feel as if she should be back". I felt kind of, gee, kindergarten. She wants her to stay. But then I kind

> of looked at it again and realized she just wasn't ready. Just wasn't mature enough, you know, and I said, yeah, it might be really good for her to stay back.

Jan's father questioned the advisability of a second year, but finally agreed to the recommendation.

> M: When I told him, he looked at me and said "Again?" I explained to him that she was just not ready and he could sort of like see it himself, even with friends, you know. I said, "You know, she just stuck with me all the time. She's not grown up enough." And he said, "Well, if they think that she has to, then she has too."

Her mother explained the situation to Jan.

> M: ... And I told her, I said, (Your teacher) wants you to stay in kindergarten another year to help her out still, sort of thing." We said we would tell her that and not ..."

The parents wondered how Jan would react as she saw her friends go on to grade one, but she seemed to accept the situation well, although she has on occasion mentioned "I failed kindergarten". On these occasions, her mother will continue to explain

> M: No you haven't. It's just - you were too young when you started. You started school when you were four. ... You just started school too early and you weren't ready to go on to grade one, so that's why you stayed in kindergarten for two years.

Kindergarten 2. The second year of kindergarten was a continuation of the first, with Jan attending the same classroom, with the same teacher. But several things differed as the teacher gave her extra (special) tasks to do and gradually Jan began to "open up". When questions were asked, she even answered some of them. The extreme emotional crying also diminished, although her mother noted that it did not disappear altogether.

Jan would get frustrated, very frustrated on occasion.

> M: If she couldn't do anything, she would just throw it away and she was just very upset ... She wanted to learn how to knit and she just couldn't do it and then she'd cry and I would get so upset. I just couldn't do anything with her.

Grade 1. During the present year in grade one Jan continued to grow and learn.

> M: And this year, it's really - she's really good, you know. She does things for herself. She'll dress herself - If I'm not there to do something for her she doesn't turn a tantrum, or you know, stop. She says "Oh, I'll get my own - own cookies or my own juice or something. I don't need you, sort of thing.

This development in Janis was parallelled by her mothers return to further education.

Jan liked grade one. If her work was not all completed in one day "she even wants to go in early". Her mother commented that Jan had a desire to do well, and "she's so proud because she's finally reading pretty good now". She also enjoyed the creative aspects of art.

> M: (Some other children) would rather be playing outside or running around but she would rather sit in here and make things with paper or doll clothes or anything.

Jan's best friend attended the separate school in the neighborhood. Other acquaintances did not tease Jan, to the best knowledge of her mother.

Although her mother hoped that everything would be better in the year to come, she had discussed with the school workers the possibility of an extended primary schooling (four years to cover grades 1,2,3) where Jan could take her time. "I don't want her to get frustrated and slow her down" more.

At the end of grade one the school recommended that Janis commence grade two in a regular program. This was based, to a large extent, on the results of the end of grade one achievement tests administered in the schools. Janis scored 57/60 in math; 44/50 in reading (decoding) and 40/50 in reading comprehension.

INFORMATION FROM JANIS

Jan had some difficulty recalling and/or verbalizing incidents and events related to kindergarten. She did, however, enjoy doing art. Her second kindergarten-related memory is that of playing house and playing school. She did not respond to a question concerning those kindergarten things that she did not like; she did not elaborate on feelings regarding her second year in kindergarten (good).

I: How come you were in kindergarten for two years?
C: I don't know. My mommy said I was too young.
I: Did she say anything else?
I: When I get older I could go to grade one.

She explained this to other children who asked why she was in kindergarten a second year: "I was too young".

Jan liked attending the second year better than the first.

I: Can you tell me why?
C: Um ... Got used to it.

INFORMATION FROM SCHOOL FILES AND TEACHER

Jan's SPICE checklist from the first year was somewhat brief. The researcher was led to understand that much information was communicated through interview. The SPICE checklist for the second year noted that Jan enjoyed small motor activities. Comparisons to the first year were also included: Her listening is much better than a year ago; her speaking skills are 'improved'. She was 'not so shy'. 'She borrowed many books this year' from the library. In summation, the teacher noted that the second year had been 'good for (Jan's) development.' "She is more secure and happy...A very delightful child".

Her grade one teacher commented that Jan was doing fair work presently. Her printing was unusually neat. She had made progress in learning basic arithmetic facts following reinforcement from home. She enjoyed singing and art with "a good ear for music" and "a definite ability in drawing". Productive group work resulted from very small groups for Jan. In fact, she was reluctant to come forward in a large group unless encouragement was given. The teacher noted that she may need more than one year to complete the grade.

F. CASE 6: SANDRA

PERCEPTIONS FROM SANDRA'S MOTHER

As a baby, Sandra was very colicy. In order to keep her quiet, "we'd do anything - you give in to her". Her mother realized that this may have been a mistake; "She was spoiled rotten".

She had little in common with her older sister. Usually they got along well, but often they fought "like cats and dogs". Sandra did not like to take orders from her sister; she listened fairly well to her mother, who occasionally would repeat something "two or three times" or raise her voice.

Kindergarten 1. Sandra was very young when she commenced kindergarten, aged four years six months. She liked school, and eagerly went. She liked socializing although she didn't have a best friend. However, she also found some of the demands difficult. She was a "hyper kid" and had a short attention span. Even at home, Sandra liked to do things "in her own way, at her own pace".

Although never attending the class, her mother did go to interviews.

At the second interview the teacher discussed Sandra's poor concentration and short attention span. She noted that Sandra could work in one-to-one situations but not in a group. At that same time the teacher suggested the possibility that Sandra may benefit from an additional year in kindergarten. Sandra's mother was "not upset". She knew that her older daughter made each grade, but not without a struggle. She felt that an additional year would help Sandra. Realizing that the school could not hold Sandra back without the parents consent, Sandra's mother discussed the situation with Sandra's father, who had not attended the interview. Both agreed to accept the recommendation.

> M: We left it to the teacher to tell Sandra. It's better that it come from the teacher than me

Afterwards her mother had simply said to Sandra:

> M: You know you're going back to kindergarten. You'll have a new teacher and a new room.

Her mother spoke to Sandra's elder sister without using the word 'fail', telling her that Sandra was simply too young to go to grade one.

Kindergarten 2. Starting the second year of kindergarten with a different teacher, Sandra was quite willing to go. Early in the year, she came home one day commenting "I have no friends, they're all in grade one." But her mother noted, "Pretty soon she made new friends, and it didn't bother her". Sandra talked little about school, to her mother, but her mother felt that Sandra "seemed to adjust". She never had nightmares or cried.

> M: She never mentioned anything (that she particularly liked about school). She doesn't really talk that much about school. If I ask her a few things she says nothing.

The following year (Grade One) Sandra had not been as eager to go each day to school as she had been in kindergarten. She found grade one work to be "hard" and she was "behind the other students". During the first "two, three or four months, she didn't want to go ... It was a fight to get her out the door".

> M: And then around Christmas time, she changed. She wanted to go.

She didn't have "a best friend", but she played with two or three children frequently.

There had been some indication by the teacher that Sandra was not achieving at the grade one level. Her mother was concerned what the recommendation at the end of the year might be, she suspected her husband would not be agreeable to another retention. She herself wondered if another year would help Sandra improve in concentration. Furthermore, she wondered where the fault lay.

> M: When you get three out of four (with learning problems) you think - well, have I done something wrong.

She had considered giving up her job at the beauty parlour, but she felt her salary was needed, "two have to work these days to make ends meet".

PERCEPTIONS FROM SANDRA

A ruddy complexioned, round-faced child, Sandra remembered her two years in Kindergarten. She could recall both teachers' names and many regular activities - teacher telling stories, singing songs, coloring and making things.

Her first teacher was nice, she recalled, but she sometimes got mad when one of the children didn't want to do his work. Then she would say "What's got into him -- put your head down".

In the second year, Sandra had a different teacher who was "nicer". Although the room was "different", many of the furnishings and activities were similar to the previous year. One other child also was retained.

Sandra was occasionally playfully teased by her playmates and she teased back, but never about the non-promotion.

Sandra has also liked grade one, noting that it was neither better nor worse than kindergarten.

C: When I get everying right (my teacher) is nice.
I: (How?)
C: I can pass out the glue.
I: And when you don't get all the work right?
C: She's mean.
I: ... What does she say and do?
C: She says, "Sit down, Sandra".

Although Sandra looked forward to eventually entering grade two, she had some reservations. It would be "hard".

C: Because you have to study at home then.
I: You don't like to study at home? How come?
C: Because you're not allowed to watch your favorite TV shows.

Sandra did not want to remain in grade one, even though it might not present as many problems as grade two. But she was a little worried. In math, "... I can't do the pluses, I can only do the minuses". Furthermore, she has heard that "If I don't be good this year, I'll have to spend another time in kindergarten" and this may also be "in grade one maybe".

INFORMATION FROM SCHOOL RECORDS AND TEACHER

The first kindergarten teacher recalled that Sandra had been young and immature. She really enjoyed coming to school and she was a friendly child to all, but she had no specific close friends in class. As the year went on, the teacher realized that Sandra was having difficulty in concentrating, especially on paper work tasks that may have had extended time periods involved. Sandra would spend short periods of time at many tasks, moving from one to the next. The teacher had recommended non-promotion and the mother had agreed.

The second SPICE checklist noted that Sandra was absent twenty-two days. "She has difficulty following instructions; she is very weak in auditory discrimination; she cannot yet hear beginning consonant sounds; she has satisfactory large muscle development; fine motor skills are weak; she enjoyes arts and crafts. It was recommended that she commence a special program in grade one.

Her grade one teacher noted that Sandra excelled in art and physical education. In a project that involved creating puppets, "Sandra got to it, finished it and was independent in the task." In physical education, Sandra displayed good coordination, except perhaps "off the board".

Sandra's academic program is individualized; her seat work is independent of the rest of the class and "tailored" to meet her needs. She is anxious to do well and in spite of some good work habits, she makes errors.

Sandra displayed a poor self concept which was exhibted in physical aggressiveness that she regularly displayed against other children in class. "Sandra took my eraser" and and "She hit me on the back" were common complaints from her classmates.

It was anticipated that Sandra would enter grade two, but continue to complete the grade one work, the following September. Sandra was recommended to an extended progress program.

G. CASE 7: SAMUEL

PERCEPTIONS FROM SAMUEL'S MOTHER

Samuel had not attended any group experience prior to kindergarten. He did not have the opportunity to be with other children: "Before, I also noticed that he doesn't like to play with other kids." He looked forward to going to school. "He was really interested. It was something new, you know."

Kindergarten 1. He attended his first year of kindergarten along with his older brother, who was attending for the second year. Samuel did not often comment about his kindergarten experiences. When he'd bring a project home, he wouldn't say anything. He would just drop it off and go outside. His mother had an opportunity to attend class occasionally.

> M: Well he didn't take advantage of the situation. He acted as though I wasn't there. So I don't think my being there made a darned bit of difference. He just acted as if no one was there.

Sam misbehaved even when she was in class.

> M: I know the teacher had to get on his tail a few times because he was always doing his own thing. He's got his own interest and...And she had to

settle him down quite a few times.

The kindergarten teacher had advised the parents to make sure that Sam did things that he was asked to do.

> M:...That's what the kindergarten teacher told us to do. "If you give him something to do, don't let him get up and walk away. Make him sit down and do it...Don't let him go." Like I said, he's very uptight; he doesn't like to do things for very long.

Non-Promotion Decision. The suggestion of a pending non-promotion decision came originally from the kindergarten teacher, at about November of Sam's first year. His father had commented that Sam was not having any difficulty in school. He reasoned that Sam simply wasn't ready for grade one. His mother agreed that Sam needed time to mature. The mother concurred with the teacher's recommendation; "...I guess we had a pretty good idea of what he was like"; the father supported her, and the decision was mutual. His parents had told Sam about the decision.

> M: We prepared him for this.
> I: And what kinds of things had you said to him?
> M: We just said that his teacher did not feel he was doing his work properly. "You just need another year of kindergarten to develop". We pretty well got him ready so the end of the year he was quite settled. He wasn't disturbed or anything. He really didn't seem to mind.
> I: Has he ever asked questions why he didn't go on with (brother) to grade one?
> M: No I don't think so. We were getting him ready all through the year because we knew full well he wasn't going on. He knew all along that he wasn't going to grade one. We just felt he wasn't ready.

Sam was not required to participate in the regular program:

> M: ... Towards the end of the times, she just used to let him do his own thing.
> I: When you say 'towards the end of the time', do you mean in the first year of kindergarten?
> M: Yes. She just let him do whatever he wanted to

> do. He didn't want to do what the other kids were doing, she would just let him go ... And do puzzles or whatever. I guess it didn't make much difference in the end.

In the second year of kindergarten, Sam attended the same classroom, with the same teacher, but without his older brother, who had gone on to grade one. During this year he still didn't play much with other children. At the end of the year a recommendation was made that Sam be placed in a special class (opportunity room). His parents objected, asking for a chance to have him try grade one.

Grade One. In grade one his mother felt that Sam was doing better school work than the previous year:

> M: Of course this is his first year in grade one. Compared to last year, I've noticed quite a bit of difference. He's probably not as active as last year. I think if he were really interested in different topics in school, he'd do really well. But you see, he picks his own. What he doesn't want to do, he just won't do. He's not dumb, by any means, he's just hyper...
> I: Is there anything in school he particularly likes doing?
> M: He doesn't talk about school much. I think anything that is not hard work ...

If the work was too hard, "I don't think he would say it's too hard. I think he would just say he didn't know how to do it". Neither would he use the word 'fail' in reference to himself. Rather he would probably indicate that he hadn't passed. He occasionally did school work with his parents.

> M: We find that when we sit him down and give him some adding to do, he'll do it any which way so that he can go out and play. So what we must do is make him sit there and do it well.

When he would play baseball with his family, including his mother, his interest would not last beyond half an hour, when he would wander away.

Sam liked to joke with his brother and he took some teasing from Johnny.

> M: Well Johnny razzes everyone about that. He's the brain in the family and he say's "You're retarded". It doesn't seem to bother them. They take so much...Nothing seems to bother (Sam).

PERCEPTIONS FROM SAMUEL

Samuel attended a kindergarten that had few memorable features about it. The only other child who attended that Sam could recall was his brother, Johnny. He remembered feeling bigger than all of the "only little kindergarteners...I was bigger than all the kindergarteners".

He teased Johnny by saying he was 'ugly' and had 'red hair'. "That's all I say to him", but Johnny didn't tease him back,

> C: No, my brother doesn't like it anymore.
> I: What?
> C: The kids.
> I: In his classroom?
> C: He used to be...He's in the room with the orange door ...

A set of neighborhood twins teased him once about his bike.

Sam likes to play with small cars.

> C: I don't crush my new cars, only the old ones...Only little ones...Rubber ones, you can't. They will bounce away. I gave one to my friend and he broke that one. One wheel was cracking. He broke the whole thing with his pliers.
> I: Did you every try pliers on a car?
> C: Not my new ones, just the old ones, just the junky cars.

A question about his two years in kindergarten produced this sequence.

> I: Can you tell me how come you spent two years in kindergarten?
> C: I passed. In two months.
> I: Who told you that you would be in kindergarten again? Your mother or your teacher?
> C: Who told you that?
> I: I was just wondering ...
> C: I'm not going in kindergarten again.
> I: Oh no, but when you were in kindergarten, who told you?
> C: (My teacher) said I wouldn't pass.

When Sam was returned to his classroom, the interviewer stayed to observe additionally. This notation was entered in the diary:

> 10:12 He joined a group of children at the large table at the back of the room (near observer). He sat and listened.
> 10:13
> Sam: mmmmmmm (mumbles)
> Observer: I beg your pardon, what did you say?
> Sam: N-O-? (staring at observer ... Letters spelled with question in voice)
> Observer: I'm sorry ... What do you mean?
> Sam: My teacher said you ... That you would tell me ... If I'd be in grade one ...
> Observer: I'm sorry, someone may have misunderstood ...
> Sam: N-O-?
> Observer: Maybe someone else will come that can answer your question, but you know, I'm only here to talk to you about remembering...
> Sam: She said you were going to test me and then say if ... (long look at observer's face). Well, am I?
> Observer: I 'm sorry Sam. I really don't know.

At this point the recess bell rang.

INFORMATION FROM SCHOOL RECORDS AND TEACHER

In his first year of kindergarten, the SPICE checklist noted that

> He prefers to play in groups; will take part in

> large group for a short time; seldom shares ideas.
> Physially, large motor is developing well; poor small motor coordination.
> Intellectually, he follows single direction orders; short attention span; speaks in gesture or single words; poor vocabulary; no left - right progression; unable to print name; is interested in stories and pictures.
> Creatively, he likes stories, action poems, puppets, movement.
> Emotionally, he seldom completes an activity; does not work independently; is happy, smiles and laughs a good deal; not confident - needs to be urged to try.

At the year end, a recommendation was made that Samuel repeat kindergarten.

The second SPICE report noted that Samuel,

> Socially, enjoys imaginative games; doesn't always participate in group activities.
> Physically, neither small nor large motor coordination are developed; spacial concepts are not developed.
> Intellectually, he cannot count, trouble with classification, and ordering; knows circle shape, not others; doesn't know colors; follows only simple directions; attention is improving; very little comprehension; language is delayed; unable to print name.
> Creatively, he is limited; enjoys listening to stories.
> Emotionally, he tries very hard to cooperate well; accepts classroom routines.

It was recommended that Samuel enter a Special Class. (He entered regular grade one.)

His grade one teacher reported that in arithmetic, Samuel was working on basic number readiness. In printing, he could copy letters but the spacing and height were irregular. He had weak general knowledge: he did not yet know color names, nor could he do simple classification. She commented that he also had difficulty in phonics:

> T: We've worked on the S and M sound since February, but those are the only ones he can talk about.

More positively, Samuel was "pretty good" in socializing. He played with other children, but most came from the special education classes rather than his own class.

> T: His personality is bubbly. He may not realize that he doesn't know as much as others. I guess he compensates ...

The teacher seemed a little frustrated with Samuel's slow progress in school matters, "after two years in kindergarten, you'd think ..."

H. CASE 8: MARTIN

PERCEPTIONS FROM MARTIN'S MOTHER

Martin spent his early years in another city. He did not attend a preschool as his mother felt that children "go to school long enough". Since Martin and his sister had many playmates, an organized social experience was not necessary. "I feel they get enough (preschool) education from Sesame Street" which Martin "really" enjoyed watching. Martin had a good memory. Since he was "about two" years old, he has known the names of the letters of the alphabet.

Kindergarten 1. With a move to the city in December Martin commenced kindergarten at the neighborhood school which was not as "far ahead" as his kindergarten in Winnipeg. He enjoyed going to class. He was quite able to do work that involved "alphabets", "numbers" and "shapes".

However,

> M: His printing (was) quite poor. He had trouble with his coordination.

With his mother volunteering each Wednesday, Martin became used to seeing his mother in the classroom. His mother observed that he was able to do the work.

> M: But he had a bit of trouble doing it. It took him longer. He needed a bit of assistance. Especially if it needed fine coordination.

At the end of the school year, the kindergarten techer recommended that Martin continue on to grade one. "She felt he was ready, from what she had tested him". He started grade one in September, enrolled in the bilingual (French) program, "because we felt it was good for him to learn two languages".

However, Martin had some problems. While most of the children had begun to learn French in kindergarten and thereby understood it somewhat, Martin was altogether in a new element. One day he returned home at lunch time with wet pants.

> M: I asked him why he didn't go in school, and he said he didn't know how to ask to go to the bathroom in French. So I guess maybe he was so bewildered that it confused him completely.

Martin also seemed to lack confidence; but it was the score of ten percentile on the Metropolitan Readiness Test that prompted the school personnel to recommend another year in kindergarten.

With his mother not feeling well, in fact, she was in the hospital, Martin's father attended an interview with the teacher and principal.

> M: I wasn't feeling well myself. So I was quite upset when he said Martin would have to go back. With the condition I was in, I really had no choice and since the decision had already been made - I didn't really have too much to say in the matter.

However, since then she had regretted the action occasionally, "because it really bothered him."

Martin had a hard time accepting the decision. He cried on several occasions, asking,

> M: (paraphrasing Martin) "All my friends are in grade one", and I said to him, "You just weren't ready". He said, "Well I was ready". ... He really felt inadequate. I would feel so sorry for him.

Looking back, his mother feels, "it might have been better if they hadn't put him in Grade one, rather he wouldn't have had that sense of failure."

Kindergarten 2. In October, Martin was enrolled in the bilingual kindergarten program at the same school. This second year seemed to progress slowly.

> M: In the first part of the year he had a fair amount of trouble doing his work or finishing it or needing assistance.

Later on, however, "he seemed to do well." From interviews with the teacher, the parents understood that "she was pleased with his work, ... And there were no problems". Only rarely did Martin cry and ask "Why?" For the most part he enjoyed that year.

Grade One. Martin continued to do well academically in Grade One. His Metropolitan Readiness Test scores was "quite a bit higher this year."

> M: His teacher seems to feel he is doing well too ... He seems to have confidence in what he is doing.

However, his mother noted that Martin was somewhat cautious bringing home his first report card.

> M: He was a little worried ... But you know, they can't read - he had a very good report ... He's quite proud of his ability to read.

Emotionally, however, Martin has been teased by some of the children who were in kindergarten the first year with him.

> M: And it bothered him - he'd come home crying. And that's hard on the parents too, because you can't really explain it to them. They haven't really failed, it's just that they're not ready. It's just maybe that they haven't got the maturity or the coordination or whatever it takes. He still feels inadequate in that he's failed somehow.

She concluded by noting that the non-promotion has not affected his enjoyment in going to school and doing well.

PERCEPTIONS FROM MARTIN

Martin enjoyed his first year of kindergarten with his "nice" teacher and many opportunities for "Show and Tell" where he could bring along "a hockey stick, a football helmet, and a tomahawk and lots of other things". The second year was decidedly different:

> C: It was French ... (also) you didn't have to line up; ... You didn't have Show and Tell ... (but) understanding was hard.

Martin didn't like doing "hard stuff" like

> C: making a circle on the board. Or when it was play time and having to this stuff. There was all kinds of stuff you had to do.

Martin remembers some of his friends from the first year in kindergarten but he can't recall that they ever teased him.

INFORMATION FROM SCHOOL RECORDS AND TEACHERS

During his first year in kindergarten, Martin's SPICE Checklist noted that he was generally a friendly child who was "capable of acting independently". His gross motor physical skills were developing, but he had problems sitting for extended periods of time. Fine motor coordination was a problem - his pencil control was "weak" and his coloring was a bit "haphazard". In the process of acquiring general learning skills, he could recognize many letters of the alphabet and he could begin to distinguish some of their sounds. He spoke in simple sentences but had no problem making himself understood. Name printing was consistently from left to right. With books he was beginning to interpret pictures. He participated willingly in creative projects.

In his second year Martin was described as an "eager, cooperative little boy" who continued to develop in all aspects of growth. His attention span gradually lengthened and his listening skills improved. His verbal use of the French language came gradually but by the end of the year he was able to understand commands and reply in short phrases.

His grade one teacher commented that Martin continued to have some problems in writing (pencil coordination) and listening ("his mind seems to wander"). He was very aware of the things around him; he was a friend to everyone. He willingly accepted responsibilities.

His mastery of the French language seemed more developed orally than in written format, where his printing seemed to deteriorate towards the end of the grade one year.

System-wide achievement tests near the end of grade one proved interesting for Martin. In mathematics, he scored 56/60. In reading he obtained 88/100, which broke down to 44/50 in decoding, and 44/50 in comprehension.

I. Case 9: CHAD

PERCEPTIONS FROM CHAD'S MOTHER

Since birth, Chad has been a hydrocephalic. He had undergone several operations; he has had some motor problems. Chad walked later than most children. But from an early age he would sit and look at books. His mother debated enrolling him in kindergarten at age four years six months because

> M: I was...wondering if I should put him into kindergarten thinking that it might be just too frustrating for him - because he gets frustrated very quickly, but the way things have gone its turned out well.

Kindergarten 1. Chad's physical condition affected his fine motor abilities.

> M: He had trouble like, coloring. He didn't seem to have much control over what he did. It was more or less just, you know, all over. It was really hard for him to concentrate and sort of get it ...

His large motor abilities were also affected. He is lagging developmentally behind other children his age in the skills of running, hopping, and skipping. This physical disability in turn affected Chad emotionally. He didn't want to participate in gym classes.

> M: He came up with every possible excuse not to. And I think it was just because of the fact that he knew that he wasn't doing what the other children were doing and it bothered him.

His mother served as a kindergarten parent aide during the year. Chad acted up "just a little", showing off when his mother was there.

As the program permitted child choices of centers in which to work, Chad took much advantage of this by not choosing tasks requiring extensive small motor manipulation.

> M:...He would steer away, as much as possible from anything that required him to color or draw or anything that he had to concentrate on that was small.

Chad worked effectively in small groups. Socially he had some problems. He had trouble making friends, "and I think a lot of his problem is just his mouth". Chad has a good command of the language "and, you know, he uses it and he insults other kids".

During December, Chad was hospitalized for another in the series of several operations that he has needed. After that Chad seemed to loose interest in school.

> M: He had some work done on his head so he had some hair shaved. He didn't want to go back because he was missing some of his hair... (The teacher) said the children said something about it the first day and that was that. After that they couldn't have cared less. And it was winter so he had a hat on outside - so no one else could say anything about it...But he wasn't as enthused about going after that.

The Non-Promotion Decision. The topic of non-promotion was first raised by the mother during an interview in "about March". Feeling that he was not ready for grade one, Chad's mother spoke to the teacher, who agreed with her. Chad's father agreed with the plans, although his mother notes "he, maybe, took some convincing". Thinking perhaps that Chad was somewhat bored with the first kindergarten situation, his father reasoned that an attempt at grade one was at least warranted "But I don't like that idea. So I don't know if you'd say I won out or what, but ..."

In conjunction with the request that Chad be retained, his mother also requested that he not have the same teacher:

> M: I made a point of asking that, and the teacher...said that she agreed...

Kindergarten 2. Chad's younger brother was born between the two kindergarten years and his mother had less time to devote to Chad at school. His best friend from the previous year went on to grade one but continued to be a friend out of school hours.

Chad's physical abilities chenged little during the second year; correspondingly, his emotional reaction to fine and large motor tasks continued to be negative.

The kindergarten program, itself, was not markedly different. Chad started the year with one teacher, who because of pregnancy, left partway through the year. He finished that year with another kindergarten teacher, whom Chad liked very much. (She had contacted the family since Chad began grade one to check on his progress).

During this course of the year 'about last April' a school child psychologist assessed Chad and recommended an occupational therapy program at a local hospital. In spite of a referral from the family doctor, Chad has not yet been accepted. "I wonder if he will ever get there".

Because of his physical conditions, Chad is subject to headaches, which may make him physically ill. He, however, had occasionally used this exemptions from tasks that he didn't enjoy doing. On the other hand,

> M:...If he does have a real one and he can't lie down, he'll be sick to his stomach. That did happen once last year when (the teacher) though that he was trying to get out of going to the gym - because he didn't like to go - the teacher thought - and he was sick to his stomach...So you have to be able to distinguish between the two...

Grade One. Chad is doing well academically at school. However, his emotional behavior and his social interactions occasionally indicate room for growth.

> M: He's immature in a lot of ways - cries easily - and when he's going to be punished for something. His way of trying to get out of it is to start to pout and stomp and cry - make a real scene...

This behavior was evident both from reports from school and from observations in the neighborhood.

> M: ... If I see him trying it outside, I bring him in. I've told him many times that I don't want that kind of behavior. If that's the kind of behavior that we're going to have he'll just have to come into the house until he - what I do is I don't ask questions.I just go out, take him by the hand and we come in the house. There's no explanation of why he's coming in - he knows...And then when he's decided that - he can go out then, fine, he goes.

His mother commented that Chad occasionally had said he didn't like school and that he would rather not go.

> M: I hadn't been feeling well and he said, "Oh, I wish I could get your sickness so I wouldn't have to go to the school, cause I hate it." But when I say, "It's time to go to school; he's got his coat and his shoes on and he's just running down the alley to get there.

Chad had asked for reasons why he spent two years in kindergarten.

> M: He asked me one time, he said, "How come I failed kindergarten". And I tried to explain to him, you know, "You really didn't fail. You just hadn't completed the work and just weren't ready to start in with the grade one work. So another year in kindergarten would help you in that you'd be ready. And once you got to grade one you'd be really good". And he accepted that.

His mother had asked him where he had heard the word 'fail' because she had consciously avoided using it in Chad's presence "I'd remind myself 'Do not say, Do not say, fail, because no one likes to be told they failed anything. Chad had replied that "Someone told me that I'd failed kindergarten".

Outside of school, Chad played outdoors a lot, or read comic books indoors. He took swimming lessons and had learned to float. "He is anxious to ride his bike but that is something he can't quite master yet".

PERCEPTIONS FROM CHAD

Chad was a bright-eyed boy, who "has got brains I haven't used yet". He would not describe himself as a uniformly happy person, "When it comes to happy things, I'm happy. When it comes to low and sad things, I'm sad". He was able to remember many details about his two years in kindergarten, although at one point he was "mixed up" in describing a "big brown" building where he thought he had attended playschool, instead of his K1. However, he could remember people ("we had lots of teachers coming through the doors and asking Mrs. Hart lots of things"); he could remember objects (real working telephones, the fireman's hat); he could remember rules ("You could still make sounds but they couldn't be loud ones"); and he remembered the punishment, because "sometimes I was fooling around":

> C:...Putting my head in a corner ...
> I: For a rest period?
> C: Un-Un, for a bad period ...
> I: How did that make you feel?
> C: Droopy...It's not up and hup, it's down and droopy.

But Chad tried not to cry in front of other children.

> C:...it's just, the kids laugh, so I try to hide my feelings.
> I: Is that hard to do?
> C: As long as you've got a smart brain like mine it's not very hard.

He is sensitive to the things others say to him, although he can distinguish between teasing that makes him laugh, and teasing that makes him cry. He cried when children have isolated his physical characteristics "Ha-a-ha-ha-ha, you can't fun fast." He is also hurt by the children who have teased him about kindergarten. On some of these occasions, he has gone to his mother or teacher but they just say "Aah, just leave them alone".

> I: Does that make you feel better?
> C: Yeah, but how can I help it, I can hear, can't I?

He doesn't like children who have said anything against teachers he has had:

> I: So these children are saying things that aren't true.
> C: Yeah, but they still hurt my feelings because they say something bad about teachers that have been doing good for me.

Chad has occasionally tried to stay home from school, usually unsuccessfully.

> C: I say "Mom, can I stay home?" or make up some excuse, like "Mom I have a headache".
> I: And what does Mom say?
> C: She says, "Okay then take off your stuff and go up in your room and go into bed. And I say "Aw, I don't have a headache" ...
> I: So were you teasing your Mom?
> C: No, I was lying.

INFORMATION FROM SCHOOL RECORDS AND TEACHERS

During his first year in kindergarten, the SPICE Checklist for Chad notes that he did participate in group activities, however, he was subject to angry outbursts and tears. His physical skills did not include mastery of either fine or gross motor abilities. Intellectually, he had good short term memory; good vocabulary; and fluent and organized speech. In creative projects, he tried. Additional comments noted that he was interested in and attentive to the class environment; and that he met most new experiences with confidence.

During his second year in kindergarten, the SPICE Checklist noted some improvements in Chad's ability to get along with other children. Towards the end of the year there was some change in attitude toward willingness to participate in motor tasks. His interest in books was commented upon, as well as occasional inappropriate emotional expression.

His grade one teacher judged his vocebulary to be well developed and hypothesized that this may have been due to the predominance of adults around Chad both in the many visits to the hospital and at home where he was an only chld for four or five years.

In class he had some difficulty in finishing work that was assigned. The teacher had found it helpful to make a deal with him to have a given number of questions finished by recess. He seemed to waste the first fifteen minutes but then he could complete many in the last two minutes. He did not bother other children when he wasn't working, "he just looks around the room".

If he had to stay in for recess, he would cry and announce that he hated school. The teacher then told him that it is his problem and he had to solve it - recess had been withheld because he had not finished his work. When he did finish, he would be able to go out. "He went back to his desk and finished off the page".

In physical education class, Chad had begun to enjoy those tasks that he had mastered.

The teacher felt Chad was doing well and attributed his present achievement to the extra year spent in kindergarten. Comparing him to another child whose parents would not agree to a second year in kindergarten, the teacher had found Chad to be less discouraged and more competent.

J. CASE 10: BARBARA

PERCEPTIONS FROM BARBARA'S MOTHER

Barbara's family had emigrated to Canada from Europe when Barbara was two years old. Prior to a kindergarten experience, Barbara was enrolled in a Montessori program, with which her mother was pleased.

> M: In the Montessori school the children had so much opportunity to learn, to explore, and to decide what they wanted to do...And they have to learn so many rules and they were encouraged to do so many things... it was amazing how much they did come to learn...(even just) by hanging their coats up...

However, the use of frequent substitute teachers displeased Barbara's mother and she withdrew the child before the end of the year.

Kindergarten 1. Barbara was enrolled in the neighborhood school kindergarten, as the youngest child in the school (Her birthday fell on the last possible day for registration).

Her mother recalled that Barbara's teacher was also very young.

> M: I suppose she was in her first class, or if not the first then she didn't have very much experience before.

Her mother allowed that the teacher "tried very hard...she wasn't that bad". However, the organization didn't seem to be as well planned in kindergarten as Montessori. For example, the children were dressed by the teacher and adult aides rather than taught to dress themselves. Furthermore, the kindergarten had more of an emphasis on play, with materials like a sand box, a tunnel to crawl through, beads to string, and a playhouse. Her mother felt that "I don't think its for an average or a little better child like she is".

However, Barbara enjoyed going to class. "She was very proud ... that she was big enough to go". She brought home papers with drawings and letters, and numbers sheets. Via interviews and casual conversations throughout the year, her mother understood that Barbara was considered an average student. However, her mother felt that Barbara was simply too young. Based on her own experience in the family's country of origin, her mother knew no child went to school before age five and one-half or six years.

> M:... we kind of grow up (first)...and that made me think she was really young...that's one thing that isn't right. Because she was an average child and if you are an average and the youngest one, that might not be the best. I...didn't like the idea.

While the parents were considering Barbara's age and her "average" status, an announcement was made that the neighborhood school would commence a bilingual French-English kindergarten the following September.

> M:...that supplied me (with a reason) because it was a good excuse to turn back.

The Non-Promotion Decision. Towards the end of Barbara's first year in kindergarten her mother approached the school teacher and principal about the possibility of enrolling Barbara in the bilingual kindergarten class.

> M: They were kind of opposed to the idea. I suppose they tried to understand my view.

Some encouragement was given to continue Barbara in the regular program. Barbara's mother was told, "She would be all right (even though) she is young" and her English needed practice ("Her English just might not be as good as other people's"). But her mother held firm, "I didn't want her to go to Grade One".

Finally the parents received the approval for Barbara to enroll in French kindergarten. Her parents explained to her that most children, by "law" go to grade one. However, she had the "privilege ... to go to French kindergarten". The parents were "pleased and happy". It appeared that the decision had no psychological impact on Barbara then (or since) since she has not questioned this fact.

Kindergarten 2. Like her first year in kindergarten, the second year was "a lot of play". However, Barbara found it "much more interesting". She was the only child from her previous year still in kindergarten, "so she (found new) friends and played with them". If any of them teased her, her mother was not aware of it. Comments from the teacher implied that Barbara was more than "just average".

Grade One. Barbara continued the following year in the bilingual program, where now she is the "top girl in class".

PERCEPTIONS FROM BARBARA

Barbara recalled that kindergarten was quite different from her present grade. For one thing "we had no desks". Also her kindergarten teacher played the piano "and we sang lots of songs". When there was opportunity to draw with crayons, "that wasn't too good". Furthermore, Barbara didn't like gym classes much either "the ball bounces away always". Two activities that she really enjoyed were "playing in the playhouse" and listening to stories on the tape recorder.

The second year of kindergarten was not the same. The class had "no play time. We had to write and draw". One other aspect that was different was the absence of a piano in the class. Barbara remembers making new friends, all of whom continued on to grade one with her. She now rarely saw her old classmates from the first year of kindergarten.

In grade one, Barbara "likes school". She said this was because she had a "nice teacher". She said that in grade one, the children had to "work", but she talked with some enthusiasm about a track meet, in which her team came in second; and a school concert in which her class performed two program items.

Barbara looked, with some enthusiasm to going to grade two the next year.

> C: Oh yes, I know I'm going to grade 2. My teacher said I'm good.

INFORMATION FROM SCHOOL RECORDS AND STAFF

During her first year in kindergarten, Barbara got along well with class members, it was noted in her SPICE checklist. However, this was qualified, "she often prefers to play alone". Her physical development was characterized by "not too well developed" small motor skills as evidenced by the trouble she had in coloring, drawing and labelling. At times this caused her to become frustrated, whereby she would "give up easily if she cannot do an activity". She preferred "playing" to "working" type activities. While her auditory discrimination was "good", she seemed to have trouble listening to directions. Her speaking skills were "good". She enjoyed looking at picture books. She had little interest in letters and numbers. She thoroughly enjoyed music and movement to music. Overall she seemed well balanced emotionally. She was not easily upset and only occasionally "stubborn".

During her second year in kindergarten Barbara seemed shy to try using French vocabulary for the first few months. She would answer questions if asked, but she did not volunteer answers easily. Later, the language was used somewhat more fluently. Otherwise her school behavior was characterized by participation in group activities and friendly associations with other children. She did not appear to make "best friends" with anyone in class. Her large motor skills were noted as "developing", and her small motor skills "improving". Her ability to hear beginning and ending letter sounds was advanced and her fluency in English language was "organized and well developed". In written work she tended to progress from left to right and, her interest in books continued. Her emotional level was characterized by "beginning independence" in work habits and assumption of responsibility for actions.

Her grade one teacher noted that Barbara was acquiring use of the French language very well. "She speaks it well...she is beginning to read well too". Her ability to write in French was expected to improve in the "next year or so".

When Barbara entered Grade One (Bilingual) she scored rather low on the Metropolitan Readiness Test (a stanine 5) but since then she has made "rapid progress". The teacher would not class her as "above average". However, she noted that Barbara occasionally seemed to have difficulty in mathematics:

> T: She works slowly at it, but she gets it in the end.

Barbara seemed to get along well with all children in the class and "she has lots of friends". Occasionally the teacher would have disputed this.

> T: When something happens and she wants to go somewhere and someone else doesn't, she will hang her head down and in a quiet voice say, "No one likes me".

K. SYNOPSIS OF CASES

Case 1: GORDON

1. History
   a. Birthdate: December 18, 1971.
   b. School Information: Location. N.E.; K1,K2 teacher: same; Attendance K1=142; K2=160; Preschool Experience=playschool.
   c. K1: absent 53 days; poor fine motor coordination; could read, although teacher was unaware; immature.
   d. Non-Promotion Decision: teacher-initiated in November; parents influenced by guidance counselor who had personnel recommendation; mother informed child; Gordon had difficulty accepting it and asked many questions throughout summer.
   e. K2: same program with same teacher; perception of boredom by parents; parents augmented school program with music lessons.
   f. Grade One: achieved very well; recommended to Grade 2.
2. Child Characteristics
   a. Sex: M
   b. Siblings: younger brother is 2 years
   c. Social: made new friends since non-promotion; stilll associates with previous classmates and friends.
   d. Physical: allergies to many things, including former family dog.
   e. Intellectual: verbal child; reads at Grade 5 level; end of Grade One achievement scores = Math=60/60; Reading(decoding)=50/50; Reading(comprehension)=50/50.
   f. Creative: N/A
   g. Emotional: has a secret wish that former friends and he could be in same classroom; reacts to yelling "it shatters him"; subject to some teasing.
3. Family Notes: father is white collar worker; work took father away from home until K2; father had hated school; mother is fulltime homemaker.
   a. Parental Perceptions: Parents regretted similarity of K2 to K1.

CASE 2: JOHN

4. History:
    - a. Birthdate: January 26, 1972.
    - b. School Information: Location: SW; K1, K2, teachers: different; Attendance K1=180; K2=185; No Preschool
    - c. K1: Some immaturity in behavior; enjoyed creative, dramatic play; no recommendation for retention.
    - d. Non-Promotion Decision: Parent-initiated after one week in grade one; Parents concerned about child's age and "middle group" placement by teacher; Parents influenced by principal of nearby school and a kindergarten teacher acquaintance; parents told John retention was related to age.
    - e. K2: At nearby school; program was geared to individuals and small groups; parents augmented school program with music lessons and Beavers.
    - f. Grade One: attended a split 1/2 class, where he absorbed some of the grade two program; high achiever; recommended to Grade two.
5. Child Characteristics:
    - a. Sex: M
    - b. Siblings: One younger sister, aged 5.
    - c. Social: Several close friends.
    - d. Physical: Occasionally suffers from bronchial allergy; sensitive to stimuli. pt>Intellectual: Very verbal; end of year achievement scores, Math=60/60; reading(decoding)=50/50; reading(comprehension)=50/50.
    - e. Creative: Interested in puppets and dramatic play.
    - f. Emotional: Accepted non-promotion decision with no tears; has regretted the repeat somewhat.
6. Family Notes: Live in upper-middle class neighborhood; father is a professional; mother is a volunteer speaker regarding parenting. Parental perception: felt responsible to locate the best school program for child.

Case 3: KARL

1. History:
    a. Birthdate: January 21, 1972.
    b. School Information: Location: NW; K1,K2 teachers: different; Attendance K1=169; K2=169; No preschool.
    c. K1: aged 4 years 7 months at admission; enjoyed going each day; liked crafts; poor fine motor coordination; poor concentration and short attention span; interacted well with others.
    d. Non-Promotion Decision: teacher-initiated in K1; parents somewhat surprised; parents agreeable.
    e. K2: different teacher, same school; continued to enjoy crafts; program highly similar to K1; parental perception of boredom.
    f. Grade One: got additional help in reading from resource room and volunteer aide; recommended to proceed from grade one to 7 year elementary program.
2. Child Characteristics:
    a. Sex: M
    b. Siblings: 2 older brothers, aged 12 and 9.
    c. Social: has several friends at home and at school; not subjected to teasing.
    d. Physical: gross motor coordination; can ride a bike.
    e. Intellectual: recalled details of a recent book read; end of grade one achievement scores: Math=47/60; Reading(decoding)=38/50; Reading(comprehension)=25/50.
    f. Creative: likes crafts; little inner motivation.
    g. Emotional: careful but not overly cautious riding bike or working at stove; somewhat uncomfortable talking about self.
3. Family Notes: oldest son achieves well in school; middle son retained in Grade 2, and still having difficulty; parents both retained in elementary grades; mother works part-time; father is a blue collar worker - works on some weekends.
    a. Parent Perceptions: not so much of a repeat in K2.

Case 4: DONALD

b. History:
c. Birthdate: October 2, 1971.
d. School Information: Location. NW; K1,K2 teachers=different; Attendance K1=163; K2=160; No preschool.
e. K1: enjoyed going each day; short attention span due to immaturity, or cultural differences, or learning problems; no recommendation to continue in kindergarten.
f. Non-Promotion Decision: teacher-initiated in early grade one;
g. K2: program was very similar to first year; very little progress; in hospital after car accident.
h. Grade One: very slow in academic areas; recommended to begin in primary opportunity after Grade One year.

4. Child Characteristics:
   a. Sex: M
   b. Siblings: One older aged 12; two younger, aged 5, 3.
   c. Social: has several close friends, from the neighborhood.
   d. Physical: active, enjoyes physical activities.
   e. Intellectual: some difficulty with recall; end-of-year achievement scores: Math=18/60; Reading=too low to give grade equivalence.
   f. Creative: enjoys woodworking.
   g. Emotional: tendency to cry when upset; self concept appeared weak.
5. Family Notes: native; on welfare; older sister had difficulty in school (attends special class); father was temporarily insitutionalized while research study was underway; mother is at home fulltime.

CASE 5: JANIS

1. History:
   - a. Birthdate: November 20, 1971.
   - b. School Information: Location - NW; K1,K2 teacher: same; Attendance, K1=183; K2=187; No preschool.
   - c. K1: did not want to go to kindergarten; often cried, or had temper tantrums in school; very close mother-child bond.
   - d. Non-Promotion Decision: Teacher-initiated in K1; father initially questioned decision; both parents agreed.
   - e. K2: With same teacher; gradual progress; given "special" tasks because she was older.
   - f. Grade One: Fair achievement throughout year; printing usually neat; recommended to commence regular grade 2.
2. Child Characteristics
   - a. Sex: F
   - b. Siblings: older brother, aged 12; older sister, aged 10.
   - c. Social: Few close friends; some difficulty communicating with adults.
   - d. Physical: Attended dancing classes.
   - e. Intellectual: End of grade one achievement: Math=57/60; Reading(decoding)=44/50; Reading(comprehension)=40/50.
   - f. Creative: enjoys art;' "good ear for music".
   - g. Emotional: Somewhat shy in front of class; positive attitude toward school and teacher; not teased by others.
3. Family Notes: Father is blue collar worker in construction: work occasionally takes him out of town; mother is enrolled in teacher's aide training program; both siblings had difficulty in elementary school.
   - a. Parental Perceptions: Mother has felt guilty about son's problems. Has felt frustrated with Janis' slow progress.

CASE 6: SANDRA

1. History:
    a. Birthdate: February 28, 1972
    b. School Information: Location NE; K1, K2 teacher: different; Attendance K1=178; K2-175; did not attend a preschool.
    c. K1 eager to go; easily distracted (short attention span).
    d. Non-Promotion Decision: teacher-initiated in K1; teacher informed Sandra.
    e. K2: Different teacher, different classroom; similar program; one other child had been returned.
    f. Grade One: Had socialization problems; poor in academic subjects; could do better in one to one situations rather than group situations; recommended to extend primary program.
2. Child Characteristics:
    a. Sex: F
    b. Siblings: Older sister, aged 12; younger sister, aged 5; younger brother, 3.
    c. Social: Friendly, usually; but often aggressive; does not have a best friend in class.
    d. Physical: Gross motor skills developing.
    e. Intellectual: Poor concentration and short attention span; end of Grade One achievement Scores: Math 44/60, Reading(decoding)=1%-tile; Reading(comprehension)=2%-tile.
    f. Creative: Enjoys arts and crafts.
    g. Emotional: Relatively low self concept; no record of teasing in regard to non-promotion.
3. Family Notes: Mother operated a beauty shop; father was a blue collar worker; older sister has made slow progress in school; younger sister may be retained in Kindergarten.
    a. Parental Perceptions: Mother was concerned about children's progress but felt she didn't have time to give to all. Since a second income was necessary, children's desires for more attention needed to come second; Mother wondered about "fault" of problem.

CASE 7: SAMUEL

1. History:
    - a. Birthdate: February 6, 1972.
    - b. School Information: Location = SE; K1, K2 teacher: same; Attendance K1=156; K2=162; did not attend a preschool.
    - c. K1: Attended with older brother who had been retained; poor coordination; short attention span.
    - d. Non-Promotion Decision: Teacher-initiated in K1, early in year; parents agreed; parents prepared Sam thoughout K1.
    - e. K2: Same teacher, same classroom; Sam made little progress; recommended Sam be enrolled in special class; Parents rejected idea.
    - f. Grade One: Had worked on basic number readiness; printing was irregular in spacing; height; recommended to opportunity room at same school.
2. Child Characteristics:
    - a. Sex: M
    - b. Siblings: two older sisters, aged 13 and 11; older brother, aged 8.
    - c. Social: Sociable with playmates from outside class.
    - d. Physical: Enjoyed gym activities.
    - e. Intellectual: Lacked many skills - at age 7, he didn't know color names, simple classification, numerals; short atttention span even in conversation; End of grade one achievement: Math 15/60; Reading(decoding)= 1%-tile; Reading(comprehension)=4%-tile.
    - f. Creative: N/A
    - g. Emotional: Poor academic self concept; happy about play-related games.
3. Family Notes: older sisters were in opportunity classes; older brother repeated kindergarten; father was a blue collar worker on shift; father "never had much use for school"; mother was fulltime homemaker.
    - a. Parental Perceptions: Parents felt children should not be taught to read, or even enter school until they are 8 or 9, when they would be "more ready".

CASE 8: MARTIN

1. History:
    a. Birthdate: December 22, 1971.
    b. School Information: Location - SW; K1, K2 teachers: different; did not attend preschool.
    c. K1: Poor pencil coordination; lack of confidence; good memory for alphabet, numbers, shapes; recommendation to enter grade one.
    d. Non-Promotion Decision: Teacher-recommended in early grade one; 10 %-tile on readiness test; father agreed in mother's absence in hospital; Martin cried.
    e. K2: Enrolled in bilingual kindergarten; the language was a fundamental differerce between K1 and K2; fine motor coordination and interest improve.
    f. Grade One: Enrolled in bilingual program; recommended to Grade 2, bilingual.
2. Child Characteristics:
    a. Sex: M
    b. Siblings: one younger sister, aged 4.
    c. Social: Makes friends slowly; is a friendly child.
    d. Physical: Fine motor coordination "is developing".
    e. Intellectual: End of Grade One achievement score: Math=56/60; Reading(decoding)=44/50; Reading(comprehension)=44/50.
    f. Creative: N/A
    g. Emotional: Sensitive to other's comments; has been teased by classmates from K1.
3. Family Notes: Moved to city from another province in early K1; father is a businessman who travels out of city; mother is a fulltime homemaker.
    a. Parental Perceptions: A retention decision at the end of K1 would be better than in early grade one.

CASE 9: CHAD

1. History:
    a. Birthdate: February 21, 1972.
    b. School Information: Location - NW; K1,K2 teachers: different; Attendance K1=170; K2=171.
    c. K1: Avoided physical (gross and fine) activities if possible; had problems making friends; was hospitalized for head surgery.
    d. Non-Promotion Decision: Parent-initiated in K1; teacher agreed; father "took some convincing".
    e. K2: different teacher by parent request; very similar program.
    f. Grade One: Achieving well academically; occasionally cried or had temper tantrum; didn't particularly like going to school; recommended to Grade 2.
2. Child Characteristics:
    a. Sex: M
    b. Siblings: one younger brother, aged 2.
    c. Social: likes to have friends
    d. Physical: Is a hydrocephalic; has motor problems; is learning to swim; cannot yet ride a bike, although he tries.
    e. Intellectual: Very verbal; end of grade one achievement scores: Math=53/60; Reading(vocabulary)-1.9 grade points; Reading(comprehension)= 1.4 grade.
    f. Creative: N/A
    g. Emotional: Child asked why he repeated, but accepted mother;s explanation re: not ready; is teased by playmates; admitted he is not always happy.
3. Family Notes: Father is a self-employed horticulturalist; mother is a fulltime homemaker.

CASE 10: BARBARA

1. History:
    a. Birthdate: March 1, 1972.
    b. School Information: Location - SE; K1,K2 teachers: different; Attendance K1=187; K2=189; Preschool=Montessori.
    c. K1: Liked going to kindergarten; enjoyed dramatic and creative "play" to academic "work"; some immaturity in pencil control, listening skills.
    d. Non-Promotion Decision: Parent-initiated during K1 year; Reason: child's entry age compared to admission age in family's home country, and child's "average" assessment from K1 teacher. School staff originally opposed the idea, as Mother had requested bilingual K2. Later, agreed.
    e. K2: Bilingual emphasis, presentation of program differed from K1; Growth and development evident in child.
    f. Grade One: Child a "good" student; sociable, with "many friends" but no particularly close one in class; recommended to bilingual grade two.
2. Child Characteristics:
    a. Social: Has few close friends; many acquaintances; somewhat shy with adults.
    b. Physical: developing coordination.
    c. Intellectual: Barbara achieved 57/60 in Math; Reading(decoding)=50/50; Reading(comprehension)=44/50. The reading scores are at the 96%-tile and the 80%-tile respectively.
    d. Creative: Enjoys music, art.
    e. Emotional: Happy pleasant child; positive self-concept; not teased by playmates about non-promotion.
3. Family Notes: two children; recent immigrants from Slavic country; father is a blue collar worker; mother babysits daily for several children.
    a. Parental Perception: Do not regard K2, in Barbara's case, to be a repeat; considered it to be enrichment, extention; felt they made the correct choice.

L. EMERGING PATTERNS

The primary observation to be noted from the data is the uniqueness of each case. The one common characteristic across all of the children was the basis upon which the selection of cases was made: each child had spent two years in kindergarten.

Several of the children who were not promoted in kindergarten did well on the end of grade one achievement tests, and several did not, as is shown in Table 1. Perhaps it could be assumed that at the time of the decision, non-promotion had been agreable to both the school personnel and the parents, because it was hoped that the child would grow in those skills neccessary for academic success in grade one. In six cases, (see Table 2) children retained in kindergarten became succeeders in grade one. However, as can be seen in four cases, retention in kindergarten led to quite a different pattern of development. The grade one year ended for Donald, Samuel, Karl and Sandra, with a promotional recommendation to a special class or special program. Donald and Samuel were recommended to opportunity rooms, Karl and Sandra proceeded to extended (continuous progress) programs, in which they would take four years to complete grades one, two and three.

This section of chapter four contains a discussion of possible influencing factors in the ten cases. Through an investigation of these cases, possible patterns are highlighted and several questions are raised. From a basis

TABLE 1

ACHIEVEMENT ON END OF GRADE ONE TESTS

CASE	MATH	READING (Decoding)	READING (Comprehen)
Gordon	60	50	50
John	60	50	50
Karl	47	38	25
Donald	18	?	?
Janis	57	44	40
Sandra	44	1%t	2%t
Samuel	15	1%t	4%t
Martin	56	44	44
Chad	53	1.9	1.4
Barbara	57	50	44

TABLE 2

RECOMMENDATION AT END OF GRADE ONE

CASE	END OF GRADE ONE RECOMMENDATION
Gordon	to Gr. 2
John	to Gr. 2
Karl	to extended pimary
Donald	to pimary opportunity
Janis	to Gr. 2
Sandra	to extended primary
Samuel	to opportunity room
Martin	to Gr. 2 Bilingual
Chad	to Grade 2
Barbara	to Gr. 2 Bilingual

of just ten cases no firm conclusions are reached. The topics are explored in four categories,

a. factors related to the history of the family;

b. factors related to the non-promotion decision, itself;

c. and factors related to the child's schooling.

The fourth category includes the interaction of several factors.

FAMILY HISTORY

Several aspects of family history seem worthy of discussion. These include the child's age at admission to kindergarten, his birth order within his family, and school characteristics of his older siblings and the parental locus of control.

BIRTH DATE

By school board policy each child must pass his fifth birthday by March 1 in order to enter kindergarten the previous September. In all ten cases investigated, the child was still four at admission, but turned five prior to the deadline (See Table 3). For purposes of analysis the school year was divided into quarters and the birthdate of each case was noted within the quarters. As can be noted in the table, all cases were born within the last two quarters of the school admission year. Thus these individuals were amongst the youngest children in their own respective class groups. The assumption that the young children in a class

TABLE 3

BIRTHDATES OF CASES

CASE	BIRTHDATES OF CASES
Gordon	Dec. 18, 1971
John	Jan. 26, 1972
Karl	Jan. 21, 1972
Donald	Oct. 2, 1971
Janis	Nov. 20, 1971
Sandra	Feb. 28, 1972
Samuel	Feb. 6, 1972
Martin	Dec. 22, 1971
Barbara	Mar. 1, 1972

TABLE 4

BIRTHDATES IN QUARTERS

QUARTERS	DATES	NUMBER OF CASES
I	Mar 2-June 1	0
II	June 2-Sept 1	0
III	Sept 2-Dec 1	2
IV	Dec 2-Mar 1	8

grouping often become the retained children in school has sparked much discussion in educational circles. A cause-effect relationship has been assumed and a common conclusion reached was the need to change the school admission age (Teachers Urge Raising Starting Age for Grade One, Edmonton Journal, April 2, 1979).

This recommendation, however, may prove to be somewhat deceiving. While the recommended change to an earlier cut off date would delete young January and February - born children in the grade one class, it would do nothing to overcome the twelve month span between oldest and youngest children within any class group. A change in the admission age will not alter the fact that there always would be some children who are youngest in each class.

According to recent research (Hedges, 1977) the age of a child within a group (that is, relative to the age of other group members) is as much a factor in his ability to operate within the group, as is his chronological age. In this light, a child's relationship to the group is partly determined by his relative age to that group. A young child may be judged immature not because his birthday is in January or February, but that because he is associating with children who are correspondingly older.

Furthermore, a search of transcriptions showed that during their first year in kindergarten, several of the children were a part of out-of-school social groups in which they were youngest. John's mother noted that John brought home friends from school who were six, eight and ten months older than he. With them, John took less of a leadership role. Gordon had attended a playschool group in which he was amongst the youngest. These children continued to be playmates during the kindergarten year. Thus Gordon was youngest in his peer-group for two consecutive years. In kindergarten, Samuel's closest playmate was his one year older brother who was also in the kindergarten class. Samuel was youngest in his family, and therefore youngest in his playmate group.

When the individual children were enrolled in the second year of kindergarten, their class associations changed. They were no longer amongst the youngest in their class. Theoretically, at least, these children (in their second year of kindergarten) had an opportunity to measure themselves in a more favorable light. Could this factor of age relative to group peers affect a child's future academic success? Perhaps, to some extent. Further research into this may be warranted.

BIRTH ORDER

An interesting pattern seemed to emerge from the investigation of birth order amongst the cases. Of the ten cases, five were first born, two were middle born, and three were youngest in family birth order. Of the first born children, all were also succeeders. (As recalled from Chapter One, succeeders were defined to be those children who were promoted to a regular grade two class.) None of the middle born children happened to be succeeding; and one of the youngest born was succeeding moderately.

The coincidence that most of the succeeders were also first born begs explanation. Perhaps because these children are without sibling precedent, it may be suggested that their parents had taken extra time in their upbringing. In effect, each was an 'only' child for some extent of time. The notion of extra time and special care afforded to first born is reinfoced by a theory developed by Harris (1964) who, in part stated that greater parental involvement with a child (as frequently occurs in first born children) leads to increased parent child relationships and is associated with greater intellectual abilities in the child.

A general tendency of first-born children to score more highly on achievement tests (Blustein, 1976) was evident in the cases: Barbara, John, Martin, Chad and Gordon. The case of Janis, the only youngest born child who was also progressing academically in school, was not seen as necessarily contradictory to any previous studies.

Indeed, the research study undertaken by this writer did not survey the population of all children in grade one, nor even a sample of all these children. Nor was an attempt made to contrast children who repeated with those who did not. It is likely that children from all ability groupings are represented to some extent in all birth order possibilities.

The combination of success and familial birth order from amongst non-promoted kindergarten children proved to be interesting for speculation. Was it just a coincidence or would this be replicable in a larger sample of non-promoted kindergarten children? More importantly, what implications does this have for the recommendation of non-promotion? If the likelihood of unsuccessful retention exists to a greater degree for later born children, should alternative forms of schooling be investigated to a greater depth for middle and youngest born?

ACADEMIC TRAITS AMONGST SIBLINGS

Another interesting pattern was found when the academic success for those children with older siblings was compared to the academic success that the siblings themselves were reported to have made in school. Of the five children with older brothers or sisters, all five cases had at least one sibling who was not achieving well in school. In some instances, all older siblings were academically retarded. The cases of Donald, Karl, Janis, Sandra, and Samuel are ones in which evidence of at least one older sibling did not progress easily through the lower elementary grades. Of Karl's two older brothers, one was retained at second grade and had continued to progress slowly over the following years. Donald's older sister attended a special class for slow learners. Janis' older brother and sister both progressed slowly -- her sister indeed was enrolled in an extended primary program. Although Sandra's sister had made one grade per year, she was having "a struggle". Of Samuel's three older siblings, both sisters were in opportunity classes and his brother was retained in kindergarten.

The data seem to suggest a familial tendency toward similar academic progress.

While it is not within the scope of this study to suggest whether similar academic traits patterns amongst siblings are due to heredity or the influence of the child's environment (this debate shall be left to psychological theoreticians), this researcher noted that a family pattern was occasionally mentioned by the mothers themselves. Janis' mother commented that her three children were not "slow learners but ... they're not super smart." Donald's mother said, she had "had the same problem with Laurie when she first went to school". Sandra's mother compared Sandra's school progress to that of her olcer sister and concluded, "and with Sandra, its the same thing ..."

The mention of patterning by a parent may suggest that whether a pattern existed or not, the parent acted as if one did. This may have affected the manner in which the parent perceived herself and her relationship with the child.

LOCUS OF CONTROL

Several of the mothers interviewed suggested possible reasons why their child achieved as s/he did. One characteristic of humans is their need to explain events and actions. Often these explanations provided a clue to the parental perceptions to their personal locus of control. According to Rotter (1966), who originally developed the notion (1954), locus of control refers to those perceptions which an individual holds that reflects the degree to which he believes that his behavior has been instrumental in achieving a given outcome. Locus of control is described ranging on a continuun from internal to external. Internal control refers to the perception of positive and/or negative events as being a consequence of one's own actions and thereby under personal control; external control on the other hand refers to the perception of events as being unrelated to one's own behaviors and therefore beyond personal control. A person's perceptions of locus of control affects his thoughts and actions. Whether this locus is centered on the parent himself, or the child, or even the school is of interest.

Samuel's mother associated her son's school difficulties with her perceptions that he was "hyper". She further suggested that his consumption of sugar might have caused his poor academic achievement. She didn't, however, suggest deleting sugar in his diet to remedy his academic problems. Apparently, Samuel's mother perceived an external locus of control. She neither assumed responsibility for her son's poor progress, nor did she locate the responsibility in Samuel's ability.

Donald's mother also seemed to express an external locus of control. She questioned the school's permissive "play". She later wondered if Donald's accident had irrepairably damaged his school ability. She further sought an answer in wondering if any problem existed at all, suggesting "I don't know what the matter with Donald is. Maybe he's just pulling his teacher's leg at school".

Sandra's mother exhibited signs of both internal and external locus. She wondered somewhat helplessly what she had done that was wrong by raising "three out of four" children with school problems. She mentioned later that she regretted that her job kept her from participating in school functions, and that this was being complicated as her daughters had begun to question her loyalty to them and their school interests.

Gordon's parents operated from a locus of control that appeared to be more internal. Gordon's mother mentioned that she felt defensive when the teacher first discussed his school difficulties, because she had felt she had done a good job of raising him. The parents tried to make the second year somewhat different by introducing music lessons into Gordon's experiences. However, his mother wished "that we could have done something" more about the repetitiveness of the second year. Karl's parents also regretted the great similarity of the second year to the first. But whereas Gordon's parents mentioned that they would have arranged for more variety had they known the extent of the similarity sooner, Karl's parents had expected that the school would have provided a program of greater variety.

In a recent study, an association was made between external locus of control and a perspective of relative powerlessness which in turn was associated with low expectations of success and poor self concept (Epstein and Komorita, 1971). A transfer effect may have operated from the parents locus of control to that of the child.

No question in the interview had been directed specifically toward perceptions of control and yet the interviews yielded some interesting data. This topic may be suitable for future indepth research. The relative significance of locus of control of parents will be discussed in exploring the apparent combined effects of several factors.

THE NON-PROMOTION DECISION

Two factors related to the non-promotion, namely, the time of the decision, and its source, seem to shed light on the effect of retention on the different individuals.

SOURCE OF THE DECISION

Of the ten cases, seven non-promotion decisions were initiated by the school, and three were commenced when the parent approached the school first.

Chad's mother considered her son's physical history and approached the school during the K1 year. Barbara's mother used the newly initiated bilingual program as an excuse to keep Barbara at a level where she would more closely approximate the school skills of her age mates. John's mother enrolled him in another school after one week in grade one. These three children whose parents intiated the non-promotion decision all became grade one succeeders.

Of the seven cases where the school first approached the parent, some variety of receptability was noted. Gordon's mother commented that she had cried for three days at the thought of non-promotion for Gordon. Martin's father accepted the school's proposal with little reservation partially because of the reality of the extremely low testing results.

The ease of adjustment of the child to the non-promotion decision may have been influenced by the parent's ease of adjustment to the non-promotion decision. Janis' mother reflected for a short while and reelized that the teacher was not making an unreasonable suggestion. After K1 Janis made progress in developing from a closely dependent child to a more independent one. Her academic progress in grade one was satisfactory, too. Samuel's parents preferred a kindergarten retention to an immediate special class placement, and consented to the school's recommendation. Samuel exhibited several characteristics that have permitted him to cope in school. He was described as highly sociable with classmates but his closest associates are not in his home room. To adult question-asking he appeared evasive. Samuel did not succeed academically in grade one.

Karl's mother, on the other hand, felt that the teacher had decided at the beginning of the year that he was going to be retained. She, herself felt that Karl was capable of going on to grade one immediately after K1, and that the teacher's early suggestion of non-promotion was somewhat presumptuous. Karl may have sensed that his mother was opposed to the non-promotion for him. He was retained; however, he did not succeed in grade one.

THE TIME OF DECISION

The time of the retention decision varied considerably amongst individuals. In some cases the parents and school agreed midway through the first kindergarten year; in other cases the mutual consent was arrived at after the child commenced grade one - even as late as the second month after the child had been enrolled in a grade one (Martin).

From the interview data, it would appear that for those parents who were aware of the pending decision in June or earlier of the first year, time (which consisted of the summer months, at least) was permitted to adjust to the decision. Time was also available to prepare the child for a smooth adjustment to the second year.

One exception to this observation, however, can be noted. Gordon (whose parents had discussed retention with the teacher since November) was told of the non-promotion by his mother before the summer. "He asked all summer, 'what do I have to do to go on to grade one?' It was just continual".

On the other hand, for those children who were enrolled in grade one before the decision was made, to in fact, 'put them back', little time for contemplation and adjustment was available. In effect, these children were in grade one one day, and back in kindergarten the next. Such was the case for John, Martin and Donald. Although these children may have been more or less poorly equipped to copy with Grade One, it could be suggested that they felt they, at least, belonged with their peers. The summaries of the cases John and Martin noted reports of teasing from classmates who had been together in the first kindergarten year. Although there is no reference to teasing as noted by his mother, Donald's case suggests other emotional reactions which might have been a result of the rapid change from Grade one back to kindergarten. John's change had less of an impact on the parents because they had considered the possbility throughout the summer and finally, they, themselves, recommended John "go back", but this was not to the same school. The impact for John was memorable. He spoke of "not really wanting to go", not wanting to go "sort of" and wondering why his mother waited until May to return him to his first school. Thus, of the three children who were returned to Kindergarten after a start in Grade One, all displayed some emotional upset.

The parent initiation of the non-promotion is a factor in several other cases. Seven children were cases involving a non-promotion decision made prior to the commencement of grade one while a full range of adjustment to grade one ensued for these children, the attention of the reader is drawn to the fact that of these seven, four were children whose parents exhibited internal locus of control (Barbara's and Chad's parents initiated their non-promotion decision; Gordon and Jenny were also children of parents with relative internal locus). These children also succeeded in grade one. The three remaining children, Karl, Sandra and Samuel were all subjects of an early K1 recommendation for non-promotion. These children's parents also happened to exhibit external locus of control. Can it be suggested that the time of the decision was a factor to some extent influenced by the parents locus of control?

SCHOOL-RELATED FACTORS

A final source of factors which may influence the child's adjustment to schooling came from the school itself. The data indicated two topics for possible exploration: the program following retention and teacher expectations.

THE CLASSROOM-RELATED FACTORS

Mentioned several times by different mothers was the similarity of programming between the two yeers of kindergarten. Gordon's mother reported that her son, who attended K2 with the same techer he had had in K1, "brought home exactly the same papers on exactly the same days (as) he'd done the year before". In spite of the fact that he had a different teacher, Karl's mother recalled Karl as saying, when he brought home "one of these old(things) - we made it last year". Both mothers concluded that their sons were bored. To avoid this particular problem, John's mother had enrolled him in a neighboring school where the teacher grouped children according to interest and ability.

Of the ten cases, three children had the same teacher the second year and seven had a different one. In one of the three cases the mother reported no boredom in the second year. In this case Janis had been made to feel special by assisting the teacher with small tasks. Of seven children with different teachers, Barbara and Michael were in programs which differed from the first year. The second language basis impressed both sets of parents that the program was not a repeat for their child. A question is raised regarding the effect of the parent's perceptions of programming compared to the ease of adjustment of the child to the second year and the subsequent Grade One.

TEACHER PERCEPTIONS

Besides the similarity or difference in program between the kindergarten years, one other classroom related factor may have been in operation. In the cases in which older siblings had experienced some academic difficulties in school, the teacher's expectations for the younger sibling may have been lowered through awareness of a real or imagined family trait. Since all perception is influenced by previous experience, logically, the teacher's perception in the classroom is influenced by her previous experiences, too. Rosenthal and Jacobson, in their book Pygmalion in the Classroom(1968) pointed out strong indications that teacher perceptions in turn influence children's academic progress. Those children who are seen as slow, are treated as slow and ultimately come to achieve at a slow pace. Those children who are seen as bright, are treated as bright, and ultimately come to achieve at a bright level. This occurs in spite of actual slowness or brightness that is inherent in the child. Although this research has been criticized by many as lacking in some of the tighter controls desirable, (Elashoff and Snow, 1971) the conclusions drawn seem to have some credence: observed behavior in children may results more from the artifact of teacher expectations than from any characteristic inherent in the children, themselves.

One person's expectations for another's behavior may act like a self-fulfilling prophesy. Studies can be found that seek to understand how teachers behavior causes "high expectancy" pupils to perform better. The Brophy and Good (1970) research, for example, revealed that teachers demanded more from students for who they held high expectations. Closely related are naturalistic studies like that of Seaver (1973) which showed that younger siblings are rewarded to some extent on the basis of teachers' prior experience with their older brothers and sisters, or the Palardy (1969) study which showed that those teachers who expected boys to be slower readers than girls, then, had such boys by the end of first grade.

If a teacher is given information which leads to the formation of high expectations for a particular student, it is likely that the teacher will treat the student in a way which will raise the student's expectations for his own performance. If this happens, the student will then behave in a way which will be positively evaluated by the teacher, and consequently in a way which will cause further raising of the teacher's expectations for the student. The expectations which are held for children therefore may be extremely important determinants of future interaction and they are partially independent of "objective" evaluation of performance. Furthermore, expectations of a given level tend to be self-maintaining for once they exist, they affect the very interaction components which determine expectation levels.

COMBINATIONS OF FACTORS

In the preceding portion of the chapter, single attributes and factors were discussed. Several such factors act in combination and serve to reinforce one another, thereby having greater impact than any one factor in isolation. A chart summarizing the characteristics of each cases (see Appendix D) permitted a global view across the cases.

The first combination apparent in the data was the possible interrelationship between the academic achievement of the individual's older siblings, the parents expectations and the individual's academic achievement in grade one. As already noted, five of the cases had older siblings, and in each case at least one of the older siblings was reported to have had academic problems in school. The juxtaposition of these data with those of the expectations of the parents proved interesting for speculation. Several of the parents had commented that they had noted a familial pattern amongst their children. Such a comment may reflect a parent perception of persistent slow progress, which may tend then, to become a prophecy which is self-fulfilled. Of the five children who had older siblings, four of the cases had continued in the apparent family pattern at the end of grade one (when they were not promoted to a regular grade two class.)

Pesearch into expectancy effects in general suggests that the reverse is also true. However, not enough of the cases had older siblings who were succeeding to permit such an investigation of this example.

Teachers may also be influenced by patterns established by older siblings either directly from siblings they have taught personally, or indirectly through reports from other teachers or through reports in cumulative record cards.

A second interesting combination of factors appeared to suggest another pattern for success and failure. The source and time of the non-promotion decision and the parents' locus of control seemed to have some bearing on the child's success in grade one. All mothers who had initiated the non-promotion decision also were deemed to have an internal locus of control. In these three cases, all children succeeded in grade one. Those cases in which teacher-initiated non-promotion decisions were coupled with parental internal locus of control also were associated with success in grade one. In these cases (Gordon, Martin), the parents generally saw the home and school environments as complementary. Something close to a partnership seemed to exist even though originally, in both cases the parents resented somewhat the initial non-promotion suggestion. Both attempted to make the best of the situation; in Gordon's case by the initiation of music lessons, and in Martin's by the enrollment in bilingual kindergarten for the second year.

The combination of external locus of control and a teacher-initiated non-promotion decision were correlated with non-succeeders. It may be suggested that perceptions of responsibility, or indeed blame, to some extent, created an emotional conflict in which the child was caught. Karl's mother, for example, felt that the school should have done more for her son while he was in kindergarten. When the teacher suggested non-promotion the mother reacted by defending Karl and suggesting the teacher was making the recommendation much too soon It may be suggested that Karl's mother perceived the teacher as not helping Karl as much as she could. Thereby a pattern of non-success was initiated: the home had a general external locus of control; it blamed the school for the child's problems; the child was retained in kindergarten and continued to have academic problems.

The case of Karl illustrates another possible pattern of success and failure following non-promotion. With their external locus of control, Karl's parents also perceived the second year of kindergarten as a duplication of the first. They felt that Karl was aware of the repetitiveness and consequently he became bored. Whether the duplication existed or not, the parents felt it was a presence and they equated this with "a waste". As noted above Karl did not succeed in grade one. In several other cases, parental locus of control and aspects of the second year could be compared with the child's achievement in grade one. Similar to Karl, Samuel's case illustrates external locus of control for the parents, a highly similar program in the second year of kindergarten, and non-success in grade one. On the other hand John's second year of kindergarten was very different from the first, because of parental choice and action (the mother was also deemed to have an internal locus of control). John's mother felt responsible for the kind of schooling her son would get. She did what she felt she had to, to obtain the best advantage for her son. He may have perceived these parental actions as "special" for him. He succeeded in grade one.

Some data were found to suggest that several other topics might be worthy of investigation. However, because of limitations embedded in the design and because of insufficient data across the cases, no consideration could be given to them. Perhaps future research may investigate these areas to some depth. Of the ten cases, seven were boys and three were girls. Because a non-random method was used to select the cases, any sex-related differences characteristic of children retained in kindergarten cannot be assumed. The limitation of the study to maternal perceptions and recollections was recognized. But paternal influences exist in families. The effect of a father's perception of his role in the family on a child's success was not examined.

V. SUMMARY,CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

In this chapter a summary of the purpose and design of the study is presented, followed by a discussion of the research questions originally posed in Chapter One. Implications for further intensive research in this field and recommendations for workers in education are then considered in the concluding section of the chapter.

A. SUMMARY

THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Each year a number of children are retained in kindergarten for a second full year before beginning a regular grade one program. Whereas this policy is in effect, no research regarding the relative advantages and disadvantages of non-promotion on kindergarten children is known. Research on non-promotion of children at other grade levels may not be generalizable to the kindergarten level because of the differing policy of joint consent required between the school and the home in the event of a kindergarten non-promotion. A review of the literature suggested that an investigation of reasons why some children are affected more positively by retention while others are not would be appropriate for investigation.

Furthermore the literature indicated that patterns of success and failure have greater impact than a single instance of either, thereby suggesting that patterns of development utilizing data from both home and school environments should be investigated.

With no descriptive research regarding non-promotion at the kindergarten level as a foundation upon which to build or extend, the study was necessarily exploratory. The case study method was selected as most appropriate because it permitted a penetrating look at the topic of non-promotion from the perspective of those individuals affected. The study was concerned with case studies of ten children. Data were collected from interviews with mothers of non-promoted children, and the children themselves, as well as from school records and teachers. Attention was paid to specific aspects of uniqueness amongst the children and also to those factors which appeared to suggest a pattern of success or failure.

THE DESIGN OF THE STUDY

Through the cooperation of the research department in a large urban school system, forty-one first grade children in twenty-three schools were initially identified as former kindergarten repeaters. Short telephone discussions were conducted with school personnel to secure school cooperation, and to obtain indications of variability in traits and academic progress amongst the children. Ten children representing a range of personal characteristics were finally selected as suitable subjects for the study. Variability existed in the sexes of the cases, the school each attended and the general achievement level attributed by the classroom teacher.

In each case the mother consented to the involvement of the child in the study and acknowledged the researcher's use of pertinent school records regarding the child. Furthermore, she agreed to participate in an interview regarding her personal recollection of events and impressions related to the non-promotion of the child.

The actual interviews were conducted over a three week span in May, 1979. The investigator visited each home to talk with the mother. An informal conversation was established with the mother encouraged to express her ideas in her own way. The investigator, if necessary, directed the conversation toward discussions of the two kindergarten years; the child's relationship to siblings, peers and adults; the child's emotional reaction during and subsequent to retention; and family roles; as well as to further explore interesting comments made by the mother. Specific examples of behavior were requested whenever possible to illustrate any generalizations made by the parents.

The child was interviewed in the school setting, but away from any distractions. Also at school, the Grade One teacher, and, if possible, the kindergarten teacher(s) were asked to describe examples of behavior that the child had displayed at various instances. The immediate grade teacher was questioned regarding the child's progress in grade one. Specific questions were directed towared displays of emotional adjustment. School records were searched for information regarding progress through the kindergarten years. The SPICE Checklists (a kindergarten type of report form) were located and pertinent notations were copied. Any cumulative record entries in regards to special assessments or health notations were also recorded.

All interviews were recorded on audio tape and hand written notes were made of relevant characteristics. A total of nine hours of interview data was transcribed and then summarized. The parent summaries were checked by the mother for errors in omission or misinterpretation. The original transcriptions were analyzed for characteristics that seemed noteworthy in their uniqueness or in the similarity with other cases. All children were code-named to preserve their anonymity.

B. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Because of the exploratory nature of the study, several questions were posed concerning the issues under discussion. These questions are:

1. What circumstances influence children's development prior to non-promotion?
2. What circumstances influence children's development during and after non-promotion?
3. What happens to children's academic success following non-promotion in kindergarten?
4. What patterns, if any, are apparent across the non-promoted individuals?

All of the preceding questions are now considered separately in the light of the analysis of the data described in Chapter IV.

1. What circumstances influence children's development before non-promotion?

Prior to kindergarten all children had occupied most of their waking hours in the home enviroment. Only two had any group experience before kindergarten. (Presumably the home was the greatest influence on the child's development.) Several home related factors were discussed. Family size varied from two to four children. Birth order of the cases ranged from first born (or oldest) child to last born (or youngest) in sibling ranking. Data seemed to suggest that the first born children had a greater tendency to become succeeders in grade one, as compared to the middle and youngest born cases. Only one of the youngest born children had been promoted to a regular grade two class. Birth order may operate to influence parental expectations.

The actual birthdate of the children was suggested as a relatively minor factor affecting the child's behavior and attitudes. While all children were born during the latter half of the school admission year, thus making all cases amongst the youngest in their group, data were cited to suggest that the influence on the child came as much from that compared to others individuals in class, as it did to simple birth date coincidence.

Another indicator of possible influence was the academic progress of older siblings. Five of the cases had at least one older brother or sister. In each of these cases, the older sibling (or at least one of several siblings) was described by the mother as having had academic problems in school. These difficulties included grade retention and special programs such as opportunity room placement. Several possible reasons could be suggested: a heredity factor is operant; home environment influence is operant; a teacher and parent awareness of older sibling's school progress may have reduced the level of expectations for the younger child's abilities. This third possibility must not be discounted (Seavers, 1973). Neither should an interaction of the three.

The exploration of parental locus of control suggested another possible source of influence. Parents with a dominantly external locus, who perceived themselves as uninfluential in affecting their child's school achievement may have tended to blame the school for the child's poor progress in Grade One. Parents with an internal locus may have blamed themselves, but also these parents more often were noted as providing additional experiences beyond that of the regular second kindergarten year. The data suggested that children with parents whose perception's were externally controlled tended to be non-succeeders; whereas children whose parens held internal locus of control tended to be succeeders.

2. What circumstances influence children's development during and after non-promotion?

For some children a strong negative impact was evident in conjunction with non-promotion. The variations in impact seemed to be associated with a number of different factors.

Two factors, closely related to the non-promotion decision itself, were discussed as possible influences on the child's pattern of development. Data pointed to the initiator of the decision (either the parent or the teacher) as the source of some of the impact. Apparently when the parent initiated the decision only minor adjustment was noted in the child. When the teacher initiated the decision a greater range of effects were noted. This range spanned from difficult adjustments to relatively simple ones. This may suggest that the way parents were told about the school recommendation may affect the impact on the child. Furthermore, the amount of time permitted for adjustment to the idea also seemed to operate in conjunction with the source of the decision. Some parents were given the school's recommendation during the kindergarten year while others were not informed until after the commencement of a grade one year. Little time was permitted for reflection or adjustment. In two cases, both boys realized that they were being required to leave their peers. In both cases, the mothers reported tears.

Another characteristic that seemed to be related to the child's development was the school program during the second year of kindergarten. Several parents reported that the child was bored by the second year in kindergarten. However, this report was not uniformly associated with a second year in kindergarten with the same teacher. In one case a child with the same techer both years was provided with a somewhat different program. Whether all parents who reported a sensation of duplication actually observed an identical year is questionable. What may be significant, however, is that they acted upon these perceptions. The impact on the child may have been the same whether a duplication occurred or not.

For those children whose parents arranged for a different year (with a different program or even a different school), greater parental satisfaction with the second year was evident.

A final possible contributor to the child's development of a pattern of success or failure appeared to be the adult's expectancies for the child. A lower teacher expectation for a kindergarten or grade one child (whether established through perceptions from previous teachers' reports, or from knowledge of older siblings, or for any other reason) may cause the teacher to treat that student differently. He may be called on less frequently in class; his comments or assignments may be evaluated to a negative degree. This in turn causes the student to lower his own expectations for himself and perhaps causes him to behave differently. He may attempt to try less hard, thus continuing to receive negative reinforcement. The reverse is true for higher teacher expectancies. Furthermore, a similar pattern may be produced by the parents at home.

3. What happens to children's academic success following non-promotion in kindergarten?

Clearly evident from the data is that all children do not benefit from non-promotion; however, just as clearly, at least some of the children do become strong succeeders. But no clear-cut cause-effect relationships could be unequivocably assumed. Six of the ten cases were recommended to a regular grade two program. Two of the cases were recommended to an extended primary/elementary program requiring the child to complete the first three grades in four years. Two of the cases were recommended to a special program, 'opportunity room'. For these last four cases, the writer wonders about the usefulness of the second kindergarten year. Was retention for these children of benefit to anyone? Indeed, should all low achieving children be retained? What other alternative programs are available for them?

4. What patterns, if any, are apparent across the non-promoted individuals?

The combination of several apparently interacting factors seemed to produce patterns of relative success and failure. A chart summarizing many of the factors discussed in this study is included in Appendix D. (The reader is invited to consult it for comparisons of the cases and investigation of patterns.)

The birth order of children may influence parental expectations for some children. And this in turn may influence the achievement that the child is capable of attaining. The special effect of first born children on parents was considered. As all first born children were achieving well after non-promotion, speculation was raised if the parental treatment for these children was different than for second or later born children.

Another combination which suggested a pattern, appeared in comparing the achievement of older siblings, the parental and/or teacher expectancies which resulted for the younger child and the achievement made by that individual after non-promotion. Most of the older siblings had a reported low achievement level in school. The progress which the case in question made in the first kindergarten year may have been influenced by the expectations of the parent and teacher. If the parent or teacher operated under the assumption of a familial pattern, the child may have sensed lower expectations in these adults and only strove enough to meet these expectancies. Presumably changes in expectancies would produce a change in the level of achievement possible for the child. Just such a change may have been evident in the one case of Janis. Her older brother was having some difficulty in school, and one might have assumed a continuation of a similar pattern for Janis. When her mother went back to school Janis was expected to be less dependent on her mother, and reportedly she showed signs of less dependence. Also Janis did not continue in a non-success pattern by the end of grade one. In all other cases of non-promotion at the kindergarten level, low achievement by older siblings may have affected the parent expectations at home, which may have been coupled with less motivation to succeed by the child. If the teacher had taught the older sibling or had knowledge of his progress though consultation with other teachers, an additional factor of lowered teacher expectancies may have operated on the same child at school.

The source of the non-promotion decision, the parents locus of control and the eventual grade one achievement of the individual suggested a third pattern. Parents who had an internal locus of control, appeared to take responsibility for their child's school progress. In the cases in which one of these parents suggested non-promotion to the school initially, all children were apparent succeeders in grade one. If the school first approached a parent with an internal locus of control regarding non-promotion of their child this child too appeared to succeed in grade one. The combination of a parent with an external locus of control who is first approached by the school regarding non-promotion, resulted in four cases of non-succeeding children. This particular combination would appear to be worthy of further investigation because of its apparent harmful overtones for the child in question.

A final combination of factors discussed was the external locus of control of the parent and the sensation of duplication of the second year of kindergarten and the resultant achievement for the children of those parents. Perhaps merely an extention of the combination cited above, this set of factors involved the apparent effect of a parent's perception of a kindergarten year which duplicated the first, the same parent's external locus of control and the child's success in grade one. In no instances did these children succeed.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Several interesting patterns seemed to emerge from the data. All of them bear further study to determine if indeed each is associated with the development of success or failure following non-promotion.

The first area that needs more research is the verification of birthdate and birth order findings. Do younger children have difficulties in school to a greater degree than older children? Is this due to the fact that they are simply young and immature? Or does the relationship with older classmates only make them appear to be less mature? What advantages or disadvantages are associated with the maintenance of single peer groups as opposed to a mixed age peer group?

Do children oldest in their family succeed to a greater degree following kindergarten retention? Do children middle-born and youngest have a different pattern of achievement following non-promotion than oldest born?

More research would be valuable to determine if the academic progress of older siblings correlated with that of younger siblings. More valuable would be an investigation into the reason why such a pattern should appear. Are parental perceptions and/or teacher expectations affected by older siblings? Is a transfer made to a younger child? How can this cycle be broken, to affect the younger child most positively? Because the study only dealt with examples of older siblings who had low academic achievement, research needs to examine if the reverse is true for high achieving older siblings.

The relationship between the time of the non-promotion decision and its source also proved interesting. Further research to examine the relative impact of each is needed. Is there a time after which it is too late to return a child to his former grade and expect success? Is there real advantage in parental suggestion for non-promotion as compared to teacher suggestion?

Of particular interest to those who work directly with young children may have been the data related to the characteristics of similarity between the first and second year of kindergarten. More research is needed to discriminate between actual similarities and parental perceptions of similarity. Does variety between the two years really make a difference? Or is it some aspect of progress and development in the program that affects a change in the child? Should the classroom teacher be changed the second year as a matter of school policy? What advantage or disadvantage is held by a teacher who knows the child well already?

Two major elements in the patterning of the children need additional research: The parents locus of control and the teacher's expectations are so fundamental to personality that they are somewhat difficult to investigate well. However, the implications of such research for knowledge of how and why children act as they do is very necessary if adults are to teach the whole child.

The indicators of patterns or the factors noted in this study need to be verified. Further researach will permit greaer confidence in the interaction of factors that lead to patterns of success or failure.

Many more ethnomethodological studies are needed to establish the basis for understanding the effects of non-promotion on young children. Correlational and experimental research too will assist in answering many questions. In the past, research has served to increase our understanding of human behavior. This understanding has been the result of lengthy procedures beginning with descriptive studies which generated indicators or possible variables for correlational studies. Numerous such correlational studies, in turn, have generated indicators for experimental research in which specific variables could be controlled. If progress is going to be made in the field of non-promtion and its effects on children the findings in this descriptive study must be confirmed and verified in correlational studies and later in experimental research, which indeed may create the need for more descriptive studies. Not until then will definitive answers to most of these questions be possible.

IMPLICATIONS FOR SCHOOL WORKERS

Several espects of the data have implications for those who work with young children. A teacher or an administrator faced with making a recommendation of non-promotion should take several factors into consideration. As illustrated in several of the cases, parental locus of control may have repercussions for the child's adjustment and future school progress. A potential powerlessness felt by the parent may be associated with her external locus of control. This perception may influence what she interprets from the school's recommendation. Until more research can verify this relationship, school workers, interested in the greatest possible advantage for the child, should consider the possible effects of external/internal locus of control, especially associated with parents who have older siblings with school problems, and be most cautious to minimize misunderstanding in communication.

The apparent difference between the first and second year of kindergarten for several of the cases matched with future success in grade one. The extent of the differences may not need to be great, but parents must perceive differences. Since a kindergarten program seeks to develop each child as far towards his capabilities as possible in any given year, differences will be apparent to the teacher.

Furthermore teachers should be aware that the source of the non-promotion decision may affect the child's schooling. Parents who are skeptical or critical of school policy may not be cooperative when a teacher-initiated non-promotion suggestion is made. In order to best help the child, parental cooperation appears to be desirable, if not necessary. Effort should be expended to elicit cooperation or at last reduce any antagonism.

Teachers should be aware of the increased potential for induced expectancy effects created by numerical scores recorded on cumulative record cards and from reports from others. Since these expectancies may become self-fulfilled prophesies, such reports should be handled with awareness and caution.

Administrators with the school boad should be aware that non-promotion at the kindergarten level is an area of research that is still in its infancy. Since little is known about the effects of such a policy on children, caution should be observed in its prescription to meet all problems. Another look should be taken at alternative policies possible in coping with children's scholastic difficulties. Since all children are unique, perhaps rigid curriculum goals that all are expected to reach in a given time span, plus the 'readiness' for next grade built into the school's evaluation of the child's achievement is unrealistic. Perhaps more flexible accomodation of individual differences can overcome many of the problems produced by policies of non-promotion.

Evident from the study is the fact that the effects of non-promotion are complex. Its effect on young children can vary considerably from individual to individual. While apparently a possitive step for some children, non-promotion was not a solution to all problems for others. A host of variables related to individual differences amongst children, their families, and their situations seems to be related to the the eventual academic progress that the child can achieve after non-promotion. Certainly more research in this area is required. Nevertheless, the results of this study suggest that non-promotion in kindergarten will not necessarily lead to further academic success.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Letter to Principals

302 9909 - 104 Street
EDMONTON, Alberta
T5K 2G5
March 16, 1979

Dear Principal,

As a teacher from the Edmonton Public School Board on leave of absence at the University of Alberta, I am presently studying early childhood education at the master's level. With the approval of Dr. T. Blowers, Director of Research, E.P.S.B., I am requesting your assistance in conducting research into the patterns of school development for those children who have repeated kindergarten.

Please complete the enclosed form by listing the names of those children in grade one, two and three at your school who have repeated kindergarten. Attendence in kindergarten is being limited to EPSB ECS classes. Please be assured that complete confidentiality will be maintained in regards to these names.

The list of names that is being compiled will be used for the selection of five children for an indepth study. Should one of the students from your school be selected for this part of the study, permission from you and the child's parents will be obtained prior to that part of the study.

Appreciating your assistance in this study and thanking you in advance for your cooperation, I remain,

Yours sincerely,

Sharon L. Skuba

APPENDIX B

Letter to Mothers

#302 - 9909 - 104 St.
EDMONTON, Alberta
T5K 2G5

April 26, 1979

Dear Mrs.

As a graduate student in Elementary Education at the University of Alberta, I am currently engaged in a research study regarding the school progress of selected grade one children. As approved by the Edmonton Public School Board Research Department and the principal of your school, this study is looking at characteristics of children following attendence in kindergarten. Your child, ____________________________ has been chosen for participation in this study and your cooperation and consent is being requested.

I shall be contacting you in the next week to make mutual arrangements should you be willing to participate; but I would like to take this opportunity to explain the project to you, so that by the time we talk on the phone you will have made your decision to participate or not based on some objective information.

This research project involves a series of case studies of children. I will be looking at the social, emotional and academic characteristics for those children who spent more than one year in kindergarten. For your child, this will involve being observed for approximately one hour in his home classroom, and a short interview. Individual teacher and parent interviews will take approximately one half hour each.

No names of individuals or schools will be used in the study. Furthermore any confidential information will not be associ ated in any way as to reflect unfavorably upon the child, the family, the teachers or the school. Please be assured that all information will be kept private.

The topic is being assessed from as many different viewpoint as possible and your cooperation would be most helpful in achieving a part of this objective. Your opinions and those of the other participants will hopefully assist in developing effective policy within our school system.

Should you have any questions regarding this project, you may contact me at 434-4787 (days) or 422-4340 (evenings).

Thanking you in advance for considering these matters, I remain,

Yours sincerely,

Sharon L. Skuba

Sharon L. Skuba

APPENDIX C

SPICE Checklist

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOL BOARD

Name ______________________ Boy ____ Girl ____

School ______________________

Teacher ______________________

Date ______ Year ______ Month ______ Day

Born ______ Year ______ Month ______ Day

Age ______ Years ______ Months

SPICE

SOCIAL, PHYSICAL, INTELLECTUAL, CULTURAL AND EMOTIONAL BEHAVIORS

SOCIAL

- Engages in constructive imaginative play
- Prefers to work and play alone
- Participates in small group activities
- Participates in large group activities
- Shares
    - ideas
    - materials
    - teacher's time
- Adjusts behavior to different settings
- Gets along with others
- Is developing manners

PHYSICAL

- Is aware of body parts and their uses
- Is growing in his awareness of space and direction
- Is developing
    - large motor skills, e.g. walking, jumping, hopping, limb movements, throwing, balancing
    - small motor skills, e.g. activities using fingers (pegs, pencil, crayon).

- Has developed handedness

- Is developing a sense of rhythm

- Is becoming aware of the body's physical needs, e.g. the need for rest, bathing, grooming, eating properly, and proper selection of clothing to suit weather conditions

INTELLECTUAL

General Skills:

Achieved through the integration of math, science, language, physical education, art, drama, music, library, nutrition, kindercooking, carpentry, field trips.

- Is learning to acquire information through
  - observation
  - classification (grouping variations, e.g. size, color, class)
  - ordering (to put in order)
  - measurement (length, weight, volume)
  - investigation (experiments)

- Understands and uses numbers in everyday activities

- Understands time sequence (e.g. yesterday, today and tomorrow)

- Transfers information from one situation to another, e.g. measuring sand to measuring flour for cooking.

Auditory Discrimination:

- Can locate the direction from which a sound is coming

- Is developing the ability to
  - distinguish differences in pitch and tone
  - identify rhyming words
  - hear beginning and ending sounds

Listening Skills:

- Follows directions
  - simple (i.e. one direction at a time)
  - complex (i.e. 2 to 3 directions at once)

- Is developing his attention span, e.g. direction, story, game

- Is developing auditory and long term memory
  - immediate recall or simple memory, i.e. tell or act out story parts
  - long term recall, i.e. verbalize yesterday's experience, meals, story plots

Comprehension Skills:

- Is beginning to understand and react to conversation
- Is beginning to
    - put events in sequence, e.g. tells story in order
    - draw conclusions, e.g. understands the final happening in the story
    - identify the main idea, e.g. picks out the important idea in a story
    - make inferences, e.g. makes judgments about happenings in a story

Speaking Skills:

- Usually communicates
    - in gestures
    - in single words
    - in short sentences
    - fluently with organized thoughts
- Attempts to
    - keep to the topic
    - ask relevant questions
    - use good grammar
- Pronounces words clearly

Visual Discrimination Skills:

- Usually progresses from left to right, e.g. printing name
- Is beginning to see similarities and differences in
    - pictures
    - shapes
    - letters
    - words
    - color
    - size

Pre-Reading Skills:

- Is developing an interest in books
- Is beginning to read pictures in books
- Is beginning to draw pictures and name objects
- Is beginning to draw pictures and tell related stories

- Is beginning to recognize signs, calenders, clocks, thermometers, dials
- Is able to print his name
- Is beginning to print other words which are meaningful to him

CREATIVE AND CULTURAL

- Is broadening his appreciation for and involvement in
  - literature, e.g. stories, poems
  - music, e.g. records, singing, dancing, instruments
  - drama, e.g. puppets, acts, plays
  - movement, e.g. rhythmic, gymnastics
  - visual arts, e.g. expression—his own and others
- Is developing an understanding and an appreciation of
  - his own culture
  - other cultures

EMOTIONAL

- Is attentive to and interested in the environment
- Accepts classroom routines and requirements as an individual, i.e. follows directions
- Is beginning to work independently, e.g. completes activity by himself
- Is beginning to take responsibility for his actions, e.g. evaluates his activities and behavior
- Is beginning to have trust and value
  - in himself, e.g. feels happy about what he does
  - in others, e.g. shares his ideas with others
- Is beginning to express his emotions appropriately, e.g. tells how he feels
- Meets new experiences and settings with confidence, e.g. tries new materials

COMMENTS

SOCIAL

PHYSICAL

INTELLECTUAL

General Skills:

Auditory Discrimination:

Listening Skills:

Comprehension Skills:

Speaking Skills:

Visual Discrimination Skills:

Pre-Reading Skills:

CREATIVE AND CULTURAL

EMOTIONAL

KC/JHH
Sept/75.

APPENDIX D

Selected Patterns in Non-Promoted Cases

Name	Sex	Birth Month	Birth Order (*B.O)	Family Size (*FS)	Older Sibling Progress	Parent Locus (*PL)	Pre K1 Group	Source of N.P. (*S)	Time of N.P.	MET Test (*M)	K1K2 teach-er(s)	K1K2 School	K1K2 Program	Math Test (*MT)	Reading (Decode) Test (*R.D)	Reading (Comp) Test (*RC)	End Gr.1 Rec
Gordon	M	Dec	1	2	N/A	I	Yes	T	K	68	S	S	S	60	50	50	Gr.2
John	M	Jan	1	2	N/A	I	No	M	Gr.1	70	D	D	D	60	50	50	Gr.2
Karl	M	Jan	3	3	+-	E	No	T	K	N/A	D	S	S	47	38	25	C.P.
Donald	M	Oct	2	4	-	E	No	T	Gr.1	54	D	S	S	18	too low to score		P.O.
Janis	F	Nov	3	3	-?	?	No	T	K	62	S	S	D	57	44	40	Gr.2
Sandra	F	Feb	2	4	-	E	No	T	K	40	D	S	S	44	1%-tile	2%-tile	C.P.
Samuel	M	Feb	4	4	--+	E	No	T	K	NA	S	S	S	15	1%-tile	4%-tile	P.O.
Martin	M	Dec	1	2	N/A	?I	No	T	Gr.1	49	D	S	D	56	44	44	Gr.2B
Chad	M	Feb	1	2	N/A	I	No	M	K	ab.	D	S	S	53	1.9	1.4	Gr.2
Barbara	F	Mar	1	2	N/A	I	Yes	M	K	49	D	S	D	57	50	44	Gr.2B

S = same
D = different
C.P. = continuous progress
P.O. = primary opportunity class
NA not available
N/A not applicable
? = could not be determined
ab = absent
+ = regular school promotion

- = non regular school progress
*B.O. 1 indicates oldest
*F.S. total number of siblings in family
*PL I = internal; E = external
*S T = teacher-initiated; M = mother-initiated
*M Metropolitan Readiness Test comes in two forms:
I is easier; II is for standard
*MT Math Achievement test - total is 60
*R.D. Reading Achievement test - decoding - total is 50
*R.C. Reading & comprehension - total is 50